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Raymond Poincaré

THE MEMOIRS
OF
RAYMOND POINCARÉ

VOLUME

II

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THE MEMOIRS

OF

RAYMOND POINCARÉ

(1913–1914)

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY

SIR GEORGE ARTHUR

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FOREWORD

In order to compress two volumes into one, it has been found necessary to suppress, or summarise, those pages in *L'Europe sous les armes* and *L'Union Sacrée,* which deal with purely French politics or with M. Poincaré's personal activities ; for the short summaries, due acknowledgement should be made to the *Annual Register.* Also some portion of the earlier part of M. Poincaré's work has been adapted rather than exactly translated, and should any loss of material or erroneous deductions have been incurred, the blame must attach to the translator ; the Zabern incident and the *émeute* at Nancy are paraphrases of the text. The latter part of the book is, however, a close translation of M. Poincaré's story, so far as this lay within the writer's capabilities ; and the same system will be strictly followed in the succeeding volume, which deals with the conduct—and incidents—of the Great War.

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CHAPTER I

Ernest Renan pictures a scene in which the Eternal, addressing the Angel Gabriel as to this planet Earth, says : " I have taken pity on those whom I have punished ; there are some great convulsions which are the preludes to bitter agony, while others are the crises which issue in a nation bearing tenfold increase. Tell poor France that I have not taken away her mandate to electrify the world with her rapid changes of front and her resilience ; there is planted in her breast the Eternal principle of resurrection."

What message on New Year's Day, 1913, could be discerned in the new " convulsions " which were rocking this planet Earth ? What had the wars on the Mediterranean coast in store for " poor France " ? Was the future to be fraught with suffering, or to bring about a new rising to life ? Far from being bright with hope, the first of January was dark with omen, and in every effort to preserve peace one seemed to be tripped up by incidents which forbade it. The conferences of the Ambassadors and of the Balkan delegates sat on in London, but bent as they were on their thankless task, the diplomatists saw no finality.

The Jour de l'An prescribes a round of formal courtesies and official greetings, and I could only snatch an early afternoon hour to attend to urgent matters, not the least of which was a visit from M. Také Jonesco who was on his way to London.

> " I told M. Poincaré ", the Roumanian statesman has since written, " that Austria was in a dangerous frame of mind and would not listen to reason (with regard to the Albanian frontiers). I warned him that if we did not indulge her caprices (Austria in the rôle of protector of oppressed nationalities might well provoke a smile) it would mean war. I could not then add that Austrian

Generals were angry that Germany, towards the end of 1912, held them off Russia's throat, as they had made up their minds that they would march to Petrograd."

Jonesco and I knew one another pretty well, but he was very reserved in what he said. Roumania was then an ally of Austria and had been sharply reminded of the fact, but my friend did say—what he has since written—that Austria, who could not bear the idea of an enlarged Serbia, still less of a glorified Serbia, wanted to make Russia attack her so as to bring Germany into a war. Nor was he less emphatic as to Roumania's claims for compensation; his country was bent on securing Silistria as being vital to her as a strategic insurance against Bulgaria's increased strength. At Bucharest he had seen M. Daneff and had gathered that, if not actually *for* Roumania's demands, he was not *against* them, and would like some arrangement. But M. Daneff, when I saw him, was not so sure about Silistria and the good-will of its inhabitants; as to this I was not competent to judge, and could only advise Jonesco to see Daneff in London and make for a settlement. But the harder Roumania pressed for a definite promise of Silistria before conclusion of peace, the more (so our Minister telegraphed) the Sofia Government evaded discussion.[1] In this respect neither Russia nor Austria could sway the balance. Ferdinand of Bulgaria went so far as to write to the Emperor Nicholas, 24th December 1912 (6th January 1913), complaining that Roumania was a source of danger to him, as she not only wanted a rectification of the frontier but also was out to extort territorial cessions, and even threatened to occupy Silistria with an armed force.[2] The astute ruler caught at the opportunity to invoke further Russian support; he would like the line Rodosto-Midia as a frontier to Turkey, and he rather coarsely suggested that the intelligent and active Bulgar at Rodosto would be a useful sentry to Russia if a future Dardanelles problem should arise.

This frame of mind did little to ease matters between M. Daneff and M. Také Jonesco, and the negotiators made a bad start with mutual recriminations as to their interview in Bucharest, which they interpreted in a widely different manner. Roumania, irritated by her neighbour's shiftiness, informed the Russian Minister that she had made up her mind to mobilise and to invade Bulgaria within forty-eight hours unless her demands were acceded to (9th January).[1]

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[1] Telegram, 2nd January. Yellow Book. Balkan Affairs, vol. ii. No. 50.

[2] Laloy, *Documents secrets*.

King Carol would scarcely have taken this high tone unless he had Berlin at his back, and on the same day Prince Lichnowsky,[2] who for once seemed a little excited, exclaimed that Germany could not join in any *démarche* at Constantinople unless the Powers agreed to join her at Sofia in pressing Bulgaria to yield to Roumania's demands.[3]

Paul Cambon,[4] in reporting this sudden threat, added that his Russian colleague had understood Prince Lichnowsky to say that Germany could not be neutral in a Roumano-Bulgarian conflict; Cambon thought this might be an exaggeration, but Lichnowsky's actual words, which he had heard, were enough to forewarn us against Germany. King Carol's reputation for sagacity had suffered at home by his failure to predict the course of the Balkan war. German in origin, and considered in Germany as a client of the Empire, Carol had turned to the Kaiser, who had no doubt given his Foreign Office, and perhaps Lichnowsky himself, a hint to encourage the sort of political blackmail which Roumania was trying to levy on Bulgaria. Cambon had noticed that the Austrian and Italian Ambassadors were evidently taken aback by the vehemence of their German colleague, and he could contradict the story that the Roumano-Bulgarian negotiations were broken off; anyhow Daneff—who had dined with him the preceding evening—did not think so, only that if Roumania opened her mouth too wide, Bulgaria would not hesitate to break, and Roumania might dig a ditch between the two countries which nothing could fill up. Our Ambassador was not sure if Russia would permit Roumania to despoil Bulgaria, and if the pair came to blows it might well be the signal for a general and lamentable flare up; Roumania meanwhile was endeavouring to raise a loan of 140,000,000 francs on the London market.

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[1] Telegram, M. Blondel, French Minister Sofia, Yellow Book, No. 58.

[2] German Ambassador in London.

[3] Despatch, 10th January, No. 24 (Série D, Carton 38, Dossier 1).

[4] French Ambassador in London.

Bulgaria, however, under Russian advice,[1] decided to make Roumania an offer which would include rectification of the frontier, the cession of about twenty villages and the Medjidie Tabya position, the dismantling of Silistria and a guarantee for the free possession of the Dobrudja. M. Blondel was by no means sure if these conditions would be accepted, and thought the situation most serious. With France, England and Russia, day in day out, urging "moderation" both at Sofia and Bucharest, Roumania ended by asking Daneff to proceed with his negotiations, but now the President of the Sobranje did not want to have anything more to do with Jonesco and would only see Mishu. Paul Cambon stepped in to clear away this little personal misunderstanding, and while I wrote a friendly line both to Daneff and Jonesco, Zimmermann, who was in temporary charge of the Foreign Office in Berlin, sent most excellent advice to Bucharest.

The Kaiser himself had, on 12th January, a very reassuring talk with Cambon,[2] whom he met after the religious ceremony which marked the Fête des Ordres. Wilhelm confided to our Ambassador how anxious he was about the strained relations between Bulgaria and Roumania, how sorry he was that personal difficulties had aggravated matters, and how surprised he was that the Roumanian Government, having instructed Mishu to negotiate at London, should have sent Jonesco there and also should have let M. Philipesco go to Constantinople. "These politicians", said the Kaiser, "are so jealous of one another that they will end by thoroughly exasperating public opinion in Roumania:[3] Lichnowsky has been told to see Daneff and Jonesco and to try to bring them to terms." The Kaiser also alluded to the fate of Adrianople, which was not yet settled: "The collective Note", he said, "which the Powers are to present to the Porte has my consent, but I could not go any further; I should refuse to take part in any naval demonstration, as I do not think the Powers should intervene forcibly in order to secure for Bulgaria the fruits of war. We shall advise the Turks to give up Adrianople, which we do not grudge to Bulgaria, but if the Turks refuse, the Bulgars must take it for themselves."

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 59.

[2] M. Jules Cambon, French Ambassador in Berlin.

[3] Telegrams from Berlin, 12th January, Nos. 18, 19.

After the banquet which followed the fêtes, the Kaiser again sent for Cambon to speak to him about Turkey, as he thought a revival of the Young Turks might spell trouble; the Kaiser complained, and certainly not without reason, of Sazonoff's declaration to Constantinople, which had also annoyed me so much, that, "if the war were to start again, Russia might be obliged to emerge from her neutrality". Sazonoff, it is true, pretended that his dictum had been misunderstood and its meaning had been twisted, but the Kaiser resented it bitterly, and read it as a menace to Armenia; and a Russian entry into Armenia might so upset things as to involve Europe; Turkey must really make peace. "Believe me," the Kaiser said, "from the bottom of my heart I am anxious that the fight should not go on, and I will do anything to prevent it developing, but the Powers should not, as such, be mixed up in it." The Kaiser, of course, said no word to our Ambassador about his own military preparations, and he spoke in the same anti-war terms to Sir Edward Goschen as to Cambon.

But Roumania—with her Foreign Minister as mouthpiece—set her face against any agreement which deprived her of Silistria; as a return she would offer Bulgaria all diplomatic, financial and even military support; M. Blondel had trustworthy information that Austria was secretly urging on Turks and Roumanians to fight anew.

Jonesco,[1] however, in a letter to Dr. Dillon, the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, denied any intention of provoking Bulgaria or any political significance in Philipesco's journey to Constantinople; but he was waiting for Daneff to give some sign of life.

These intrigues served, of course, to hamper and hinder negotiations in London, while haggling over the Ægean

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[1] Telegram, Bucharest, 13th January, Nos. 8, 9, 10.

Isles was making bad blood between Greeks and Italians. On 5th December M. Giolitti[1] had disavowed any idea of converting occupation into annexation, but made a cryptic reference to a European conference which might determine the destiny of the islands. Some days later M. Venizelos telegraphed his thanks to San Giuliano[2] for this declaration which he cleverly interpreted in a sense favourable to Greece, but only received in answer a somewhat frothy assurance of friendship. Early in January the Italian Ambassador to St. James's put the matter a little more clearly by telling Sir Edward Grey that Italy would not hand over to Greece the islands adjacent to Asia Minor.[3] Greece was a young and enterprising State, and to give her territory near Asiatic Turkey would stimulate active propaganda among the Hellenic population there and promote the decay of the Ottoman Empire.

Austria versus Montenegro was an even knottier point. King Nicholas had set his heart on Scutari and declined to bargain with Austria,[4] who clung to her scheme for a large Albania with Scutari as the capital. Sazonoff suggested—a suggestion which Paul Cambon thought going rather too far[5]—that the town should go to Albania and the suburbs to Montenegro.[6] The Montenegrin Minister in London, M. Miouchkowitch, now apparently wanted to make a deal—just what his master had loudly refused to do—and to get Scutari, he proposed offering Austria that Mount Loevchen which the Allies so mysteriously lost in the war,—an unforeseen proposal which alarmed both St. Petersburg and Rome.[7] On the 6th January Isvolsky[8] brought me a note in which the Russian Government protested hotly against an alleged intention of Nicholas and his Minister to let Austria have part of the sanjak of Novi-Bazar and Mount Loevchen, it being urged that the latter was an important

[1] Italian Prime Minister.

[2] Marquis di San Giuliano, Italian Foreign Minister.

[3] Telegram No. 32 to M. Barrère, and reply 15th January, No. 7

[4] Telegram, Cettigne, 1st January, No. 122.

[5] Telegram, George Louis, 2nd January, No. 3.

[6] Telegram, London, 2nd January, No. 3.

[7] Telegram, Cettigne, 3rd January, No. 3.

[8] Count Isvolsky, Russian Ambassador in Paris.

strategic point dominating the Bay of Cattaro, and that to give it to Austria was to fly in the face of what the Powers had laid down as to their territorial disinterestedness. Paul Cambon, after talking the matter over with Count Benckendorff, could trace Isvolsky's fertile brain and fluent pen in the Note; [1] Benckendorff [2] was rather sceptical about Miouchkowitch's supposed manœuvre, and agreed with Sazonoff that the best way out might be for Albania to have Scutari, and Montenegro the suburbs, the lake and perhaps Ipeck. Our Ambassador threw a little cold water on the idea, as he thought that if Austria got Scutari, it might be a question of compensating Montenegro, and this at the expense of Serbia, who was very keen on Ipeck. To take one bit out seemed to pull the whole puzzle to pieces.

Montenegro wanted a town not yet her own; Serbia wanted to stick to what she had got; Austria wanted to extend the frontiers of an autonomous Albania, and Russia wanted precisely the reverse; meanwhile the two latter "stood to", the one without demobilising the divisions which she had reinforced, the other without disbanding the class which she had kept under the colours. M. Kokovtzoff [3] had warned Louis [4]: "If Austria does not make up her mind to reduce her effectives before the end of the year, we shall probably be obliged to keep our last class beyond that date. I should like to do this unostentatiously, but this will be impossible, as we cannot proceed without a ukase ".[5]

Sazonoff and the Austrian Ambassador had spoken quite frankly to one another. The latter declared that at the outset of Balkan hostilities the Austrian companies were on an establishment of only 60 men as compared with the war establishment of 150, and that the Austrian army was therefore numerically inferior to any of the other great Powers, and especially Russia. "We must therefore", he went on, "raise our effectives to a 200 men establishment on the Serbian frontier, and 130 on the Russian frontier. The former figure could be reduced when Austro-Serbian matters are arranged, but we could not reduce the 130 men establishment, as this is the figure adopted both in Germany and Russia ; we shall consider this as normal and not change it." " Then ", Sazonoff replied, " we must keep the class which is due to be disbanded on the 31st December." Count Thurn merely replied that his Government would raise no objection to this.

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[1] Letter from London, No. 29, 11th January 1913.

[2] Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London.

[3] Russian Prime Minister.

[4] French Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

[5] Telegram, George Louis, 2nd January, No. 3.

Up to then Austria's military programme had decided Sazonoff to ask that the Conference of Ambassadors should wait until things were a little quieter before legislating about the Albanian frontiers ; Sir Edward Grey had agreed, and the discussion had been adjourned. But after his interview with Count Thurn, Sazonoff changed his mind, and Paul Cambon telegraphed to me (3rd January) that the interview between the Russian Minister and the Austrian Ambassador had made the former anxious as to the ill effect which might be caused by keeping up the Austrian and Russian armaments, and that he had instructed Benckendorff to try and hurry up the Ambassadors' deliberations. " I have told Benckendorff and Grey ", our Ambassador reported, " that there is no need to worry about the Austrian armaments. Austria says that she is going to ' stand to ' until the Austro-Serbian questions are solved. What are those questions ? 1. The delimitation of Albania. This will require time, and we can't hurry on simply because Austria is keeping her companies 200 strong on the Danube. 2. The evacuation of Albania until the conclusion of peace. Albania is Turkish territory, occupied militarily by the Serbs, who cannot leave until the Cease Fire has sounded. Nebulous suggestions of Serbian officers are of no sort of importance. The Serbian Government has agreed to refer to the Powers, and will give up Albania when peace is concluded. What can Austria do ? Nothing but spend a lot of money without anything to show for it. Sir Edward Grey shares my opinion and will let Sazonoff know our views." I replied approvingly to Cambon, and quoted from a letter which had been written to Isvolsky :

"In view of the further opinion of the Russian Government we can only associate ourselves with M. Sazonoff's wishes. . . . But although we shall not urge an adjournment of the discussion, we agree with Sir Edward Grey that the delimitation of Albania will take time and that we must not hurry the Ambassadors simply because of Austria's larger establishments."

Rightly or wrongly, the Serbian Government believed in an Austro-Roumanian secret entente. Our Minister at Belgrade, M. Descos, telegraphed to me on the 17th January:

"Paschitch thinks that Roumania is poked forward by Austria so that, when the moment arrives, she can go up and help her without having the responsibility of an act of aggression which would deprive her of Germany's eventual co-operation. Paschitch is anxious about the Austrian military measures . . . these preparations, which used to be rather ostentatious, are now very discreetly made and even concealed so that one reads in them the opening move of some predetermined action, and not a mere demonstration."

The Serbian Minister, having drawn Count Berchtold's attention to certain incidents on the frontier, was told that these were only in view of the internal safety of the monarchy; on the other hand, he had told St. Petersburg they were necessary on account of the goings on in Serbia.

All this did not further the work of the Conferences in London, but a larger difficulty really lay in the evasive attitude of Turkey, who seemed to have learnt nothing from the victories of the Allies. On New Year's Day the plenipotentiaries—with M. Venizelos as their chairman—had held their seventh session, and the Ottoman delegates had consented to give up Macedonia, but had refused point-blank to do the same as regards Adrianople and the Ægean islands. A break off in the negotiations and a break out of further fighting seemed almost inevitable, and the Ambassadors considered that the Great Powers must intervene. Sir Edward Grey suggested a collective *démarche* to the Porte to insist on peace being signed at once. An offer might be made that in return for giving up Adrianople to Bulgaria and, provisionally, the islands to the Great Powers, guarantees, administrative and religious, might be forthcoming; Turkey should be warned that if hostilities began again, Europe would have to consider the whole future of Constantinople as well as a development of war in Asia Minor. The Ambassadors all agreed that this *démarche* might well be backed by a naval demonstration.

Personally, I had no objection either to the *démarche* or to the demonstration, but I thought it risky to raise a question of altering the *status quo* at Constantinople. It was easy to see that any notion of a Turkish exodus might result in a breach between Russia and Germany, and I wanted to avoid anything which could in any way break the European entente; on this point I therefore qualified Sir Edward Grey's suggestion. Moreover, there was some doubt as to what the real opinion of the German Government was. Prince Lichnowsky agreed to the idea of a naval demonstration, but the Kaiser refused to be associated with it. Kiderlen, the rough but on the whole peace-loving diplomatist, had just died, and his successor—who proved to be Herr von Jagow—was not yet designated. The German Chancellor[1] told our Ambassador how ardently he hoped Europe would avoid a conflict.

> "Things seem to him better here", Jules Cambon telegraphed (4th January), "than they were six weeks ago. What is important in his eyes is that the Great Powers should continue to observe, with regard to the Balkan States and Turkey, the same prudent attitude and the same unity of front as there has been since the beginning of the crisis, that they should not yield to the temptation of replying to the individual requests of the belligerents and especially of Turkey, that they should discuss between themselves the questions which interest them, and that they should avoid those only of interest to the belligerents and which might cause them to appear in their eyes as divided in opinion. . . . He added that he would like Austria and Russia to show by some step taken simultaneously that their intentions are pacific, of which he has no doubt. He says that in every country there is a military party which wants war, and that if any single Power wanted it, it would be inevitable, but that, thank God, all the Powers want peace."

In the course of a despatch of the same date, Cambon referred to this conversation.

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[1] Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg.

" This language reflects what the Chancellor really thinks but it contradicts what he openly said at the Reichstag on the 2nd December when he placed himself alongside Austria. Perhaps it was to justify this contradiction that he spoke of European opinion being less bellicose than it was six weeks ago. . . . In view of the Triple Entente and to balance it, Germany considers her first care is to maintain and cement the Triple Alliance. In the Triple Alliance itself she thinks that Austria is more liable to be independent than Italy, and she will do everything she can to tighten the bonds which fasten Vienna to Berlin. Now if it is against France that Germany and Italy are united, it is against Russia only that Austria wants to defend herself by placing her hand in that of the conqueror of Sadowa. Therefore every time Austria appeals to the gleaming sword of her Ally, it is against Russia that Germany is obliged to make some public manifestation. But therein lies the complexity of German policy. Germany is traditionally the friend of Russia, and there is always a sort of family intimacy between the Hohenzollern and the Romanoff. I will go further ; as the revival of the Holy Alliance has become impossible owing to the daily increasing intervention of popular sentiment in the policy of the Government the unfriendliness between Petersburg and Vienna serves Germany's designs because it renders Austria more dependent and therefore more faithful. In spite of all appearances, therefore, Germany pursues a policy of balance between her two neighbours. She continues, despite her greatness, the policy of Little Prussia. Bismarck always said that he did not care two pins about the Balkans, but that the question of the Near East could only be settled by agreement between Austria and Russia. This agreement has been effected quite otherwise than he thought. He presided over the Berlin Congress which, in creating the Balkan States, threw Russia and Germany outside the Balkan Peninsula. Since then, with Austro-Russian rivalry in the Balkans, it is rather a matter of traditional prejudice than of clear thinking as to their own interests ; *amour propre* is rather at stake than sound reasoning. For a long time still Russia at Belgrade and Austria at Sofia will look for a clientele and engineer intrigues ; but the Balkan States have felt their own force and it would only be to deceive oneself to think that one can at any time make them follow any other design than their own.

" Germany most certainly is well aware of the effect of all these changes ; she is making ready to substitute if she can the Balkan States for the Turkey she is giving up in Europe, but her fidelity to Austria makes her suspect in the eyes of these little States. It is for this reason that M. Theotokis, the son of the only Greek politician who ever had German sympathies, admitted to me that the lesson of the war was that Greece and Serbia should lean on the Triple Entente. Thus Germany, who does not see the future very clearly and fears a war in which the risks will outweigh the profits, is obliged to hold herself in. She talks loudly of her sympathy for Austria, but behind the scenes she does all she can to check her. This is well expressed in the *mot* which the Kaiser is supposed to have said to the Archduke Franz Ferdinand: 'Take care, you are rattling *my* sword too loudly'. Unfortunately for her, Germany wants men or *a* man. Kiderlen saw things in a very clear light, and was not in the least afraid of displeasing Vienna. One wonders if a new man will have a sufficiently strong hand on Austria, who hates the part of 'brilliant second' which was the Kaiser's unfortunate description of her."

How much longer was Austria going to rattle Wilhelm's sword? And how much longer would Germany find herself able to hold in hand her "brilliant second"? No one could say, but as Germany was for the moment in a peace-pursuing mood, we were only too glad to work in harness with her; a collaboration we had started and of which, day by day, we saw the benefit.

From Italy M. Barrère reported divided opinions:[1]

"Some people think and say that the Austro-Hungarian Government wants war and has no illusions as to the danger which may be found in a powerful and well-organised Balkan Confederation; it would be better to have done with such before its strength be developed. At the Consulta they believe, and above all they want to believe, that Austria does not desire war, but that she is determined to fight rather than to renounce certain claims which she thinks necessary to her prestige; the refusal of access for Serbia to the Adriatic was one of the cardinal points of her policy, and the delimitation of Albania another. The conclusion drawn by the Marquis San Giuliano is that one must try to satisfy as far as possible Austria's *amour propre* which has been sorely tried by the victories of the Allies, and in such case the peace of Europe would be assured. Certain people who believe themselves to be well-informed and less dazzled than is the Foreign Office by the display of Austrian force insinuate that the Dual Monarchy thinks that Europe will retreat in front of its very decided attitude. These people say that Austria's military

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[1] Despatch No. 6, 8th January.

> parade is something of a bluff, while she is quite aware of the disastrous conditions which would attach for her in any outbreak of war."

Anyhow, both France and Russia herself had for some weeks been sedulously nursing Austria's prestige. Under Sazonoff's advice Serbia had charged the Powers to settle the question of access to the Adriatic, and under the same advice she had let London know that, with peace signed, she would evacuate the coast within a period to be fixed by Europe.[1] So it was not from Belgrade that we had to look for trouble, it was at Constantinople that ill-will, impotence and anarchy remained true to themselves.

On 5th January the Turkish Ministers flatly refused to accede to the Allied demands: and yet saddled the Allies with the responsibility of breaking off negotiations.[2] By a pretty euphemism the Allies spoke of "suspension" of negotiations, which allowed the Conference the right still to exist.[3] It was necessary to set afoot at once the collective *démarche* to the Porte, and our Ambassador wrote to me on the 9th January[4] that Sir Edward Grey agreed with me as to Turkey being told she must give Adrianople to Bulgaria and let the Powers settle the question of the islands:

> "As to the proposed naval demonstration," he went on, "Count Mensdorff says that his Government has no objection to this on principle, but has not said that steps would be taken immediately; he added that the Vienna Cabinet had said nothing as to Thaso. The Italian Ambassador thinks it would be desirable to avoid any naval demonstration, but if it takes place he favours sending warships to Besika. The German Ambassador tells us that like instructions have been sent to his colleague at Constantinople, and he thinks your formula the best."

Two days later Herr Zimmermann, without actually repudiating Prince Lichnowsky's assent, asked that the Note—which Paul Cambon had drafted and which had been approved by his colleagues and Grey—should be a little watered down.[5] The German Under-Secretary said at the same time that he would urge Turkey to do what she was told,[1] but that the Government associated itself with the Kaiser's dislike to a naval demonstration, and one could not but fear that if Germany held aloof, Russia would take on the job herself, which would be no less inconvenient than risky. Cambon wrote to me on the 13th January : [2]

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[1] Note from Serbia, 8th January.

[2] Telegram, Pera, No. 4; Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 55.

[3] Despatch, 6th January, No. 6.

[4] Despatch, No. 22.

[5] Telegram, Berlin, 11th January, No. 6.

> " Lichnowsky says the Porte might refuse the passage of the Dardanelles, that it would be difficult to get pilots, that the principle of neutrality would be infringed, in short that his Government has turned down the demonstration. . . . Grey has raised the question of sending cruisers to Besika Bay as (in view of possible eventualities) it might be necessary to send a strong force to the Golden Horn and that we should, as a matter of precaution, have at the entrance to the Dardanelles an international squadron ready for anything."

Finally, in a document in which all the languages of Europe seemed to have been put into a melting-pot, a decision was registered against a naval demonstration. The Serbian and Bulgar troops, irritated by the sullen silence of the Turks, now made ready to fire again,[3] and while Ferdinand's behaviour at Vienna became more and more suspect,[4] the Balkan delegates in London irritably told Paul Cambon that if Turkey would not come to hand they would break off their *pourparlers*.[5] Until the 17th January the German Ambassador in Constantinople was without instructions ; he was then told to fall in line with his colleagues, and that afternoon the Note was presented by the Austrian Ambassador to the Turkish Minister, who merely said that the Government would reply without any delay.[6] At the same moment Sazonoff, thinking that the collective Note had been too much toned down by Germany, unexpectedly suggested that the Triple Entente alone should put pressure on Turkey to make peace. Any such move seemed dangerous alike to Bompard,[1] Paul Cambon and myself, as it would serve to reveal our dissensions to the Porte, and might disturb the concert of the Powers. Just as I got this news, the vote of the Congress of Versailles caused me to place my resignation as Président du Conseil in the hands of M. Fallières. But I would not wait for the formation of a new Government to oppose this dangerous project, and telegraphed Louis[2] that he was to press upon the Russian Minister the views of the French Ambassador at Constantinople and the objections raised by Sir Edward Grey to his proposition.

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[1] Telegram, Berlin, 11th January, No. 17.

[2] Despatch, No. 31.

[3] Telegram, Sofia, 16th January (Série D, Carton 8, Dossier 1).

[4] Despatch, 14th January, No. 35.

[5] Telegram, London, 15th January, No. 21.

[6] Telegram, Pera, 17th January, No. 30, *vide* note Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 67.

> " M. Sazonoff will certainly recognise that under these conditions any separate intervention by the Triple Entente at Constantinople is impossible. Our Government attaches the highest importance to seeing eye to eye with our Ally, and hopes therefore that the Russian Government will refrain from any action which might entangle the policy of our alliance."

In the very hour when I signed this telegram I was elected President of the Republic. Once more, despite the ex-Kaiser's statements in his *Tableaux d'histoire*, which others have repeated, I would mark that France at no time surrendered her right of initiative nor her entire independence, and invariably demanded to be preliminarily consulted upon all points by her Ally.

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[1] French Ambassador in Constantinople.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 71.

CHAPTER II

[On the 17th of January M. Poincaré was elected to the Presidency of the Republic for a term of seven years, and on the following day he handed to President Fallières his own resignation as well as those of his colleagues. M. Briand was at once charged with the formation of a new Ministry, and within three days his Cabinet was complete. M. Barthou was Vice-President of the Ministry and Minister of Justice; M. Klotz was Minister for Finance; and M. Jonnart, M. Etienne and M. Baudin took over the Portfolios of Foreign Affairs, the Army and Navy. The Ministry presented itself before the Chambers on 24th January, and an almost unanimous Order of the Day was passed expressing confidence in the Government. The Estimates of Expenditure (for 1913), already two months late, were disposed of not without difficulty on 16th February, and the consideration of Estimates of Revenue begun. The inauguration of M. Poincaré, who was intensely and universally popular, took place on 18th February, and was the occasion of festivities in which the people of Paris shared enthusiastically. In the evening of this very successful day M. Briand tendered the resignation of the Ministry, which the new Chief of the State promptly refused, and the Cabinet remained in office. Two days later a message from the President was read in both the Chambers and the Senate. M. Poincaré thus showed he intended to exercise the prerogative of his office, which his predecessors had, perhaps mistakenly, neglected: the right to address the Parliament directly by a message. The document set forth with great precision the necessity for preserving intact the authority properly belonging to the head of the State, and after strongly insisting on the need for safeguarding and increasing the good fame and strength of the nation, the President closed with: "It is in the service of this policy and the maintenance of this unity in the future that I shall unfalteringly employ all my energies".]

M. Briand's Cabinet was differently composed from that over which I had presided. I could not but regret that Léon Bourgeois was no more in it and, at Briand's request, I had begged him to stay. "I only remained for your sake", he said to me; "now that you are elected President, my day's work is over."

I had scarcely handed over my duties to Briand and Jonnart when I found myself, whether I liked it or not, committed to an existence, which contrasted sharply with the former occupations dear to me, in which visits and receptions must play a leading part. Although I was no longer head of the Government, and not yet Chief of the State, I could not go to the Academy without being treated as a Prince of the Blood, nor witness my friend, Maurice Donnay's play, *Les Éclaireurs*, without being the object of a public manifestation at the Théâtre Marigny. M. Loubet and M. Fallières were kind enough to come and see me, and while giving me kindly and valuable advice, let me see that the chief magistracy with which I was about to be charged would by no means be "roses all the way".

M. Jonnart, as soon as he was installed, begged me to come sometimes to the Quai d'Orsay to tell him about affairs in general and to get from him the last news. I had already heard from Cambon's despatch that the death of Kiderlen[1] had at least one baneful consequence: the Kaiser, who had hitherto kept a little outside foreign politics, now wanted to handle them himself, especially as regards the Near East. Kiderlen, who had little affection for Baron Marschall and less faith in the future of Turkey, was disposed to coquette with the young Balkan states. Regarding Austria, as he did, rather coldly, he was secretly a little inclined towards the Triple Entente, so that during his life, despite Herr Hollweg's resounding professions of friendship, the Dual Monarchy had been by no means sure of her Ally. With Austria now more confident, the German Ambassador at Constantinople was doing his best to encourage the friendly feelings for Turkey which had cropped up again in Berlin and was stiffening the Turkish backs—an odd way of promoting peace.[1]

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[1] Herr Kiderlen-Waechter, Foreign Minister.

Turkey had, however, decided to accept the conditions of the Powers, and an assembly of all the notabilities over which the Grand Vizier presided (while the Sultan sat in an adjoining room), voted, with only one dissentient, that the war should end. Only a few hours afterwards Enver Bey, at the head of a group of young Turk officers, and assisted by Talaat Bey, overthrew Kiamil Pasha, and the Committee of Union and Progress returned to power with Mahmoud Shevket Pasha as Grand Vizier. The war was to be renewed. Jonnart telegraphed to George Louis that the *coup d'état* in Constantinople might seriously affect public opinion in Russia, the Ambassador was to warn Sazonoff that nothing should be done which might in any way involve the Alliance and more especially that a military demonstration against Armenia might endanger the Anglo-Russian agreement and open up, under most dangerous conceivable conditions, the whole question of Asia Minor. "You should remind Sazonoff", the telegram concluded, "that the British Government declined only six days ago to share in an action by the Triple Entente in Constantinople and we cannot adopt a different attitude without preliminary consultation."

The telegram was almost a textual reproduction of instructions I had formerly given, and of which Briand had always approved.

Another telegram to all diplomatic posts ran on the same lines and the same date (24th January):

> "In view of the Revolution in Turkey the Government of the Republic considers the Concert of the six Great Powers the most efficacious means of maintaining the national existence of Turkey and of safeguarding the Peace of Europe."

European Concert; reminder to Russia that she must agree with us before taking any initiative—this was simply a replica of what I myself had been driving at all along, and it was a matter of common sense to re-affirm these recommendations.

Sazonoff—except for the unfortunate warning to the

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 71, 76, 78.

Porte five weeks earlier[1]—disavowed any idea of isolated action, but this did not prevent him from telling Berlin—without consulting us—that he was uneasy as to Turkey and the Turks. He added that if the Powers told the new Turkish Government that they would stick to the terms of their last note, the Turkish Ministers would undoubtedly bow to the behest of Europe. What was more serious, he ended up his message by saying that the Imperial Government considered the renewal of hostilities to be fraught with grave complications; that it would do its best to prevent it, and that should the results of the war be put in doubt, public opinion in Russia would place the Government in a very serious situation.[2]

Jonnart was much upset when Isvolsky told him that the Russian Note had been sent; he telegraphed to Louis that the Ministers here were unanimously of opinion that Russia should have taken counsel with us before doing what she had done, and that they regretted no reply had been sent to Jonnart's telegram of the 24th January. Our Ambassador met with a rather evasive answer when he handed in this message to Sazonoff, and it was as evident as ever that no love was lost between them, and that whether through Isvolsky or Louis, Paris had difficulty in making herself heard in St. Petersburg.

New clouds were hovering over Europe, and while Herr Hollweg showered Jules Cambon with his pacific propensities he gave him to understand that it must be "Hands off" Asia Minor. Berchtold[3] in Vienna was rather disconcertingly optimistic, and at London the Balkan delegates told the Turkish delegates that *pourparlers* were broken off. The fog was thickening when Russia, deaf to our advice and entreaties, thought well to interfere again, this time at Bucharest, where she said that the concessions made by Sofia were satisfactory and that Roumania should accept them.

The Russian Memorandum was a little monument of infelicitous expressions:

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 82, Telegram, 25th January.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. ii.

[3] Count Berchtold, Foreign Minister.

"To persist further just because Bulgaria is in temporary difficulties, and thus render Turkey a service to the detriment of Christian nations will be to compromise for an insignificant gain the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Roumania, Bulgaria, and Russia. The suggestion of Roumanian support in taking Adrianople has been rejected by Sofia for reasons of legitimate national pride. An act of aggression by Roumania or an armed occupation of Bulgarian territory whilst this State is still at war with Turkey would provoke an explosion of public feeling in Russia to which the Government could not remain indifferent. If, however, Roumania accepts the Bulgarian offer, Russia would be prepared to guarantee her the Dobrudja against any Bulgarian attempts."

As soon as Jonnart heard from Isvolsky of this inconsiderate Note, he telegraphed to Louis—who had told him nothing:

"Russia's step is very serious. To tell Roumania that Russia cannot countenance seizure of Bulgarian territory is to announce armed intervention. We should have been first consulted. It were equally in place to confer with us as to the guarantee offered to Roumania regarding the Dobrudja. Russia's initiative gravely compromises the peace of Europe. There seems to be no doubt that if Russia attempts armed coercion of Roumania, Austria will take up arms and intervene. This would threaten a general conflagration; Germany would probably take sides with her Ally without waiting to find out who is the aggressor. The Government of the Republic maintains, therefore, every reservation as to Russia's *démarche* at Bucharest. I should like to confer with the Russian and British Governments as to urging a policy of moderation on Roumania."

To emphasise the warning Louis was to give, Jonnart told him to let Sazonoff have the telegram as an *aide-mémoire*. As I was President elected but not yet installed, Jonnart has been quite erroneously alluded to as my mouthpiece. Jonnart first consulted Briand and the two then consulted their colleagues under Fallières' Presidency; the new Cabinet, faced with the same difficulties at St. Petersburg, was as plain spoken as I had been; it was not a matter of Louis being too harsh, it was rather a matter of having to ginger him to do the needful.[1] Moreover, just as I had done, Jonnart kept Sir Edward Grey closely informed.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 95 and 96, 1st February 1913; No. 97, 2nd February 1913.

Turkey's ambiguous reply to the Powers did not rule out a resumption of negotiations, and we assured Herr Jagow—for which he seemed grateful—that we were again ready to collaborate with Berlin.

Just now the Emperor Francis Joseph, who was sadly worried by the military expenses he was incurring, gave Prince Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst a letter for the Czar, with peace in every line of it ; Nicholas replied on the same note.[1] But it was the conversations between Hohenlohe and Sazonoff, rather than the polished letters of the rulers, which did something to clear the air.[2] Austria was quite definite that she would not tolerate a great Slav State on her southern frontier, and that her military preparations were directed against the Serb danger, internal and external. The Prince explained that they had mobilised two Army Corps in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and reinforced five others on the Danube and in Galicia ; with peace Austria would be able to demobilise. Sazonoff retorted that until Austria demobilised, Russia must retain under the colours the class due to leave. Hohenlohe fervently disclaimed any idea of attacking Russia ; the thing was unthinkable. Sazonoff equally disclaimed any fear that Austria would attack Russia herself, but Russia could not be indifferent to an Austrian blow at Serbia. Hohenlohe then said that Russia was lucky not to have the jumble of nationalities which made Austria's task so difficult, and Sazonoff suggested that only in France was there perfect fusion. There issued from the interview that Russia would not let Serbia be squashed, and that Austria would not tolerate an unduly swollen Serbia : a *via media* must be found.

France got to work and approached the capitals of Europe to set afoot the resumption of negotiations between Turks and Bulgars, to solve the question of Adrianople, and to prevent Roumania and Bulgaria from coming to blows over Silistria. The Yellow Book [3] testifies to our efforts ; Jonnart was playing the same tune as I had done, and in the same key.

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[1] *Vide* Émile Laloy, *Documents secrets*, p. 65. Édition Brossard.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Telegram, George Louis, 9th and 10th February, Nos. 104 and 105.

[3] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 106 *et seq.*

CHAPTER III

The Russian Ambassador was once more asserting himself; an attack of influenza had laid him low for three weeks, and his Chargé d'Affaires had been sending home accurate and well-balanced reports, repeatedly stressing our desire that Russia should take no steps "on her own" and explaining why France could not take part in any naval demonstrations without the concurrence of the Great Powers.[1] But with Isvolsky's recovery, exactitude took a second place to self-glorification. He had sent one or two feverish messages to Sazonoff from his sick-room, but unfortunately his first day out was just after Jonnart had heard of Russia's address to Berlin, and his first call at the Quai d'Orsay was to find Jonnart much incensed by what had taken place, and to be told so pretty plainly. Moreover, the Ambassador had just received a letter, omitted from the Black Book, from his Chief to which he thus alludes:

> "I received your last letter whilst ill. It seemed to be—perhaps because of my condition—unduly sharp. It is my duty to advise you exactly as to existing conditions here, even at the risk of displeasing you, as on them may depend this or that decision of the French Government at the critical moment; I cannot conceal from you the impression made here by some of the things you have done."

Isvolsky misunderstands, or affects to misunderstand, the reasons for our protests against Russia's ill-advised moves. Stung by the rebuke of his Chief, he throws himself upon me.

"It is a matter of form rather than of substance", he went on. "Poincaré is exaggeratedly sensitive as to what affects

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[1] *Vide* Black Book, vol. ii. pp. 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 17, 23, for M. Sevastopoulo's reports.

amour propre, and you should adopt a more conciliatory tone. What hurts me most is your reproach that I want to deprive Russia of her freedom of action."[1]

It was evident that Sazonoff had scolded the Ambassador for not having stood up stoutly enough for Russia and for having accepted our standpoint, and that, far from kowtowing to Russia, we were "out and out" for the concert of Europe; assuredly, also, Isvolsky, in his interview with me of the same day, tried so to colour things as to justify himself in the eyes of his superior. He recounts a long conversation with me, 29th January, a day when I was rushed from morning till night; so that when I received Isvolsky, I was, though perfectly courteous, perforce rather hurried. But he tells Sazonoff that I gave up all other things so as to have the pleasure of seeing his Ambassador, and that I had some sensational proposals to put forward. And despite his "great fatigue"[2] and "profuse sweat",[3] the courtier *par excellence* sends to St. Petersburg a voluminous cable and two long despatches![4]

If Sazonoff is not wholly appeased he must indeed be hard to satisfy! Isvolsky gives just the colour which *he* wants to what I say. I told him that, as President of the Republic, I could still influence French foreign policy, that Russia must confer with us before doing anything likely to lead to war, and that her *démarche* at Berlin was unsatisfactory. Isvolsky recited my remonstrances faithfully enough, but wishing to do so without getting a counterblast for himself, he accentuated them. He described thus a remark of Jonnart: "The French Government has to reckon with Parliament and public opinion, who at any moment could want to know of anything which might conceivably involve France in war". I had actually said what I had often myself said or written to Isvolsky or Sazonoff, that we must not be called on to carry out our obligations as Allies without being informed and consulted as to Russia's moves.

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[1] French translation, Black Book, vol. ii. p. 18.

[2] Black Book, vol. ii. p. 15.

[3] Black Book, vol. ii. p. 18.

[4] Black Book, vol. ii. pp. 14-22, 16th/29th January.

In the Black Book Isvolsky says that according to me

> "it is of supreme importance that the French Government shall be able to prepare Public Opinion in advance as to the war which may break out over the Balkans."

The German text does not give "to *the* war", but "to *a* war" —*an einem Krieg*—it does not give "which *may*—*kann*— break out", nor "which *could*—*konnte*—break out", but "which *might*—(*könnte*)—break out",—shades of speech which perhaps are not without significance. What I really said to Isvolsky is quite obvious, but *he* presents things *suo modo*, and the Black Book gives further flourishes.

I pass over the Ambassador's impression of myself personally, the impression perhaps of a rather uninformed foreigner. I have a more serious account against Isvolsky, which recent publications compel me to comment on. It will be remembered how he repeatedly complained to St. Petersburg that he had insufficient cash to influence certain French papers, and that his predecessors and other Ambassadors were much better treated in this respect. Here he was not far wrong, for I had good evidence of bankers of alien extraction supporting (not too discreetly) Austria's political as well as financial moves, and even a deputy was said to have thus suborned a small section of the Press. These persons were beyond the arm of the law. We were at peace, and it was no crime to take foreign money, and, indeed, since the war, we have witnessed some renaissance of the process.

In the critical month of October 1912 Isvolsky's impatience reached fever point, and he came to me, a little ill at ease, to say very cautiously what, according to the Black Book, he had already frequently written to St. Petersburg: that some of the minor French papers were subsidised by the Triple Alliance, that he was about to ask for funds to neutralise them, and that he would like me to know about it first. My advice was against any such thing, but as he evidently intended to go his own way, I added that I expected Russia as a friend and Ally to do nothing outside the control of the French Government; a control which I had neither the means nor the wish to exercise. But the

Ministry of Finance had publicity agents, whom I did not know personally, and I would refer him to M. Klotz.

How did Isvolsky report this conversation to St. Petersburg, and what did he say to the Financial Councillor at his Embassy? In 1912 I could not know this definitely, but one thing struck me. M. Kokovtzoff,[1] who had spoken to me of Isvolsky as accessible to certain financial influences, wanted to make some inquiries, and sent M. Davidoff[2] here; Davidoff told me that Kokovtzoff was putting 300,000 francs at Isvolsky's disposal, and seemed to think that I had approved or even initiated the subsidy plan. I protested strongly to him and by letter to Kokovtzoff against any such idea. Davidoff rather aroused my suspicions. I urged on him not to open at the moment a credit for that purpose, for I hoped that if postponed the scheme would subside.

Those who know me would know how I disliked being mixed up in such matters; I was wise to keep aloof as much as possible. I am scarcely surprised that *L'Humanité* and the Fichte Bund Committee of Hamburg[3] have since tried to make capital by distorted extracts from Isvolsky and Raffalovitch. To read the papers dispassionately and in their full context is only to confirm my own statements. The articles in *L'Humanité* of December 1923 and January 1924, are from the pen of M. Boris Souvarine, a naturalised Russian, whose real name is Lifchitz. It is a little odd that a Communist writer should so blindly confide in Isvolsky and Raffalovitch. Souvarine professes impartiality, but as he is out to prove that I conspired with Isvolsky to make the war, his impartiality wears thin! Thus one of Raffalovitch's numerous letters of 1905 or 1906 refers to a certain "Pybie" who could help in the distribution of Russian funds, and Souvarine makes no bones about asserting that this " Pybie " is Poincaré ! It was curious that a Russian writer should forget that in Russia " P " is " R ", that " y " is pronounced " ou " and that " b " is " v ". With a moment's thought the author would have known that " Pybie " was pronounced Rouvie, and that Raffalovitch is speaking of Rouvier, then in power. Three days later M. Souvarine recognised his error, but promptly made another :

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[1] Russian President of Council and Minister of Finance.

[2] Director of the Imperial Chancellory for Credit Operations.

[3] The standard of accuracy aimed at by this Committee may be indicated by a single extract: "As to Poincaré, the French historian, Ernest Renauld, hurled at him in a full meeting of the Chamber, October 1922, this terrific accusation: 'You are the greatest grave-digger in Europe', etc.". Needless to say that Ernest Renauld has never spoken in the Chamber, and for good reason.

> " Pybie ", he wrote, " is not Poincaré but Rouvier, formerly Président du Conseil. We were led to attribute to Poincaré what should properly have applied to the head of the Government by the fact that Poincaré was Minister of Finance in Rouvier's Cabinet."

Only I never was Minister of Finance nor of anything else in Rouvier's Government, as Souvarine might have found out in any reference book before writing.

I became Finance Minister in Sarrien's Cabinet, 1906. At this date letters sent by Raffalovitch to his Government miscarried and were published in French papers. In these the Financial Councillor to the Embassy complains of the embarrassment caused by my austerity. According to *L'Humanité*, the sums distributed—with M. Lenoir as intermediary—by the Russian Embassy rose from 935,785 francs in 1904 to 2,014,161 in 1905. (*Vide L'Humanité*, December 14, 1923 ; December 19, 1923 ; December 22, 1923, and December 24, 1923.) In March 1906 and during my Ministry, complete silence ! The Councillor came to me only once to protest against certain placards, which he thought might hurt Russia's credit ; I could only say there was nothing in them with which we could interfere.

In 1912 I had to be just as careful as in 1906. In 1913 Lenoir—with whom hitherto I had not even a bowing acquaintance—asked for an audience in order to defend himself against the charge of being a henchman either of Caillaux or of Clemenceau. He wanted to assure me that he had done nothing to oppose my election, and he flattered himself that he could bring Clemenceau and myself together. I saw him for a few minutes as a matter of courtesy, and neither saw nor heard more of him till 1914, when he sent me, to my great surprise, some of his own poems! Such was the beginning and end of our relations!

Isvolsky's game is pretty obvious. In his letter of October 1912, published in part by the Hamburg Committee under the heading of "Preparation of the World-War by Corruption of the Press", and printed as a whole by *L'Humanité*, 7th January 1924, he wandered no further from the truth than was necessary to get the money he wanted; but he presented the matter so as to make his Government think I was at one with him, a method in which he and Raffalovitch were equally expert.

On the 23rd October 1912, Isvolsky warns Sazonoff of subsidies which some of the Paris papers are getting from the Triple Alliance. "Not only I, but the French Foreign Office is concerned about this, and I am compelled to the conclusion that M. Poincaré believes we must do likewise." One sees the twist. It is not I who am concerned, but the Ministry. Isvolsky does not say that I want something done, but that he is compelled to the conclusion that I want it. He reminds his Minister of the subsidies sent on Rouvier's advice to Lenoir, since when he has not received a kopeck! Isvolsky is careful not to say that I have asked or suggested anything, but he says that he has confided his intentions to me and is "convinced" that I am willing to propose an opportune plan to him. He does not pretend that I know Lenoir or have spoken of him, but "*Lenoir is apparently well known to him*, and he *probably wants us to go to him*, if and when his collaboration would be desirable".

October 17/30 Sazonoff wrote that it had been decided in Council to allot 300,000 francs to the Embassy; but that neither he nor his colleagues had much faith in Lenoir. Raffalovitch hurried to reassure the Minister as to this. He does not say in so many words that I have recommended Lenoir, but "the Prime Minister seems to have more faith in Lenoir here than you have at Petersburg", etc. Kokovtzoff, however, refused to smile on Isvolsky's scheme, which he did not think straightforward, and on the 18th November, after having seen Davidoff twice, I wrote to him that I wanted to rectify an inaccurate version of a certain matter

> "Your Excellency seems to have thought it was the French Government which wished the Imperial Government, in view of present conditions, to devote certain sums to influence the Paris Press in favour of the Franco-Russian Alliance. Nothing could be further from the truth: the French Government has never said, nor thought of, anything so indiscreet, and on the contrary, it was the Russian Ambassador who expressed the view that a credit for this purpose would be useful."

As the Frs. 300,000 had already been allotted to Isvolsky, and I could not prevent him from using them, I might have stopped there and left the Russian Government to use its own judgment. I added, however:

> "I told M. Davidoff that I did not want to have anything to do with the matter, but that if you were giving Isvolsky a credit of Frs. 300,000, I should advise you to dole it out to him very gradually and in small sums."

I could not give Kokovtzoff a stronger hint to let Isvolsky finger as little money as possible.

On receipt of this letter Kokovtzoff sent a confidential note to Sazonoff (December 3, 1912, *L'Humanite*, January 10, 1924) showing that he was no dupe of Isvolsky.

> "Poincaré told Davidoff that the idea of funds to influence the French Press originated purely with our Ambassador; he only advises that money should be given very gradually. As a result of later *pourparlers* between Poincaré and Isvolsky, it is agreed that there is no immediate necessity for distributing money, but that it might be useful to have a reserve fund of Frs. 300,000. A letter from Poincaré to me of 18th November confirms this statement."

My part had been a very simple one. Knowing that these funds had already been allotted, I said that nothing justified immediate expenditure, and that nothing should be done even later without the knowledge of the French Government, and only under the supervision of its agents.

M. Klotz had no objection to Lenoir, and as I knew nothing about him, I had no preference for him over anyone else; it emerges from the Isvolsky-Raffalovitch letters that Lenoir, against my advice, asked for an immediate advance of Frs. 25,000. Of this I was unaware, as also that Lenoir asked for money at the Embassy, pretending it was on behalf of M. Israel (*L'Humanité*, January 18, 1924). Nor did I know that on 4th March 1913 Lenoir sponged on Raffalovitch to the tune of Frs. 35,000, alleged to be for M. Briand! (*L'Humanité*, January 12, 1924). As Raffalovitch said, I had never been told of this " cuisine ", nor, needless to say, had Briand. My only recollection, which is confirmed by records, is that from the 1st to the 27th January 1913 I had not spent a centime of the special funds, and left to my successor a surplus of Frs. 80,000. If I had wanted to give Frs. 25,000 to French journals, I need not have knocked at Isvolsky's door for it.

It is equally untrue to say that my Government angled for Russian money to support the *Radical*, of which M. Perchot, a Senator, was then editor. We only represented that some millions were due in Russia to the French company of the Port of Touapse in which M. Perchot was the chief shareholder, and that so far he could not get justice done to him: as a matter of fact, the settlement did not begin till the end of 1913, whilst it was obviously the duty of the French Government to support a French industrial undertaking.

So much for what the Fichte Bund calls the preparation for the world-war by corruption of the Press! One of the very few Frenchmen who associated themselves with this sordid campaign was Victor Margueritte, who was perhaps better qualified than anyone else to speak as to Press subsidies. The son of a General, this officer who, during the war, was first on the staff of the Military Governor—when he asked me to let him accompany me on one of my visits to the Army—and then attached to the Military Press Bureau, wrote to me (on War Office paper) on 7th May 1915:

> " I have not been able to see M. Delcassé again, and M. Piccioni says that the Minister showed some hesitation when he asked him to continue the monthly subsidy of Frs. 10,000 to the *Information Universelle* for the duration of the war."

M. Delcassé may well have thought that Frs. 120,000 a year for M. Victor Margueritte's publication was excessive.

M. Margueritte, on the contrary, said that the Minister was not making the best use of what was offered to him, and that if the Foreign Office did not help there would be a stoppage of

> "a propaganda which is sure to be effective and is highly necessary for France in face of Germany's formidable effort."

It is amazing that any American writer should be so ill-informed as to take the wretched calumnies of the Fichte Bund seriously! One bright individual actually asserts that the Russian Government sent money to our Treasury and myself to ensure my election to the Presidency;[1] one wonders what estimate this gentleman could have had of the French Assembly or of France herself! The Black Book—if he had taken the trouble to read it—would have told him that I did what I could to prevent any distribution, and that up to my election less than Frs. 25,000 had been spent; which really sounds rather a small sum to buy the entire Congress! This impertinence reminds one that during the war the Germans and the Chancellor himself were pleased to say that after a visit to Berlin, General Soukhomlinoff came to Paris in January 1913 to work for my election; Soukhomlinoff, who was tried and condemned for treason, died a refugee in Germany, the land of his choice, February 1926.

Another American goes even further.[2] He has taken from the *Handels-Zeitung* a telegram attributed to Isvolsky which the Ambassador is supposed to have sent in July 1913 to Sazonoff. No one has seen the original of this remarkable telegram; no one says from where it was taken, nor was it published by Stieve or the Black Book. German papers copied it from a Leipzig paper, and the Americans, particularly New York *L'Humanité*, November 1924, followed suit. It is mutilated, bears neither number nor series, and the passage quoted has every sign of being a forgery. Isvolsky is supposed to have had an interview with me, July 1913, and to have written in Russian to Sazonoff.

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[1] M. W. L. Langer, *New Republic*, April 15, 1925.

[2] H. E. Barnes. This article has been reproduced, also a French translation of what I published in *Foreign Office*, by M. Mathias Morhardt's review.

> "This interview convinces me that Poincaré entirely agrees that the moment has come for us to realise the aims of our traditional policy."

And here, no doubt fearing that Sazonoff would not understand his own mother tongue, Isvolsky adds in brackets in French ("à réaliser les aspirations séculaires"). The telegram continues:

> "Also to re-establish the European equilibrium by the restoration of the usurped provinces of Alsace-Lorraine."

I am said to foresee difficulties on the part of the Radical-Socialists who are opposed to any sort of war, partly for financial and economic reasons, and above all, to any war breaking out in the Balkans.

> "The party has capable leaders: Caillaux, Herriot,[1] Poincaré, and controls a good many deputies and journals. Poincaré agrees with me that we must make a big sacrifice. I scarcely dare to suggest Frs. 3,000,000, of which Frs. 350,000 shall be for the *Radical*, Perchot's organ; but if we consider how insignificant is the sum in comparison with the immense issues at stake, perhaps you will think well to submit the suggestion to the Council of Ministers."

Had I really made any such ridiculous remarks to Isvolsky, the lunatic asylum and not the Elysée should have been my lodging. If Isvolsky had invented the whole thing and had founded on it a demand for tenfold the amount allotted to him, and which I had prevented his squandering, he would surely have carried cynicism a little too far and might have been locked up as a pickpocket. And if the Ambassador had penned this telegram, he must have known that it would reach Kokovtzoff, to whom I had shown him up, and he would scarcely have exposed himself to a second snub. The telegram, if not a forgery, is a tissue of lies; and if the *naïveté* of those who took it seriously disarms criticism, the effrontery of its fabrication tends to make suspect many other documents derived from Russian archives. I may mention that the Isvolsky-Raffalovitch correspondence was offered to me for a sum of money by a rather dubious personage before being published in *L'Humanité*.

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[1] If at the time Herriot was an eminent member of the Radical Party, he had not the political status to justify Isvolsky's alleged description. I can suggest no explanation for finding my own name among the Radical-Socialist leaders.

An event of some importance occurred between my leaving the Quai d'Orsay and taking up my residence at the Élysée. It occurred irresistibly both to Briand and Jonnart that the moment was fully ripe to replace George Louis, and that they might match a man with an opportunity by appointing M. Delcassé—who had accompanied M. Loubet to Russia—to a distinguished but difficult post. Isvolsky secured for us the Czar's willing consent, and on the 17th of February a letter was addressed by Jonnart to Louis which did full justice to the retiring Ambassador's many services, and which entirely explained the necessity of changing horses even in mid-stream of something like a crisis.

To say that France, at the beginning of 1913, as the result of recent alarms, was under a wave of patriotism would be true; it was as untrue to suggest that there was any sort of fermentation of chauvinism. Thus the Belgian Minister in Paris, Baron Guillaume, blundered psychologically in the reflections he conveyed to his Foreign Minister in a letter which the Germans found in the archives at Brussels and which they published with a great flourish of trumpets. Baron Beyens, who represented Belgium at Berlin, saw the situation in a much clearer light when he wrote to his Government on the 18th October 1912:

> "The first effect of the Balkan crisis has been to bring about closer relations between the German Government and that of the French Republic. Both of them equally anxious to see the conflict localised in the peninsula and to avoid European war, they agreed to give the same advice to their respective Allies, Russia and Austria, and at the same time they took part in the rather belated action at Constantinople and in the Balkan capitals. M. Poincaré's personal initiative, with a view to re-establish peace, has received not only the approval but the praise of the whole German Press."

And on the 30th November he added:

"Whatever ideas—and he has large ideas—Herr Kiderlen may have in his head as to reconciling his country with the sympathies of the young Balkan Powers, one thing is certain that he wants to avoid a European flare up. On this point German policy sees eye to eye with that of England and France, who both are resolutely bent on peace."[1]

In justice to Baron Guillaume it should be said that his letter to M. Davignon was not completely produced and was wrongly dated. It ran thus:

PARIS, 14*th February*, 1913.

"The new President of the Republic enjoys here a far greater popularity than has done any of his predecessors. M. Poincaré is day by day the object of manifestations of the utmost sympathy; he is invited to banquet after banquet, his praises are sung at the corners of streets, in cafés-concerts, and cinemas, and the appearance of his picture or the mention of his name are the signal for loud applause. Great fêtes are being got ready for the day when he will actually enter on his Presidential powers; Paris will offer him an official reception, and hundreds of Societies are asking to be included in the cortège when he goes to the Hôtel de Ville. This popularity is made up of various ingredients; his election was carefully engineered; one knows in the course of his administration he manœuvred very skilfully for France to be prominent in the European concert; he has expressed himself in some very happy phrases that have caught on. But primarily one must see in all this signs of the old French chauvinism which for many years was away from view, but which has come to the fore again with the Agadir incidents. M. Poincaré is a Lorrainian and never misses an opportunity of reminding us of it; he was the collaborator and instigator of the militarist policy of Millerand, and his first word after he had been elected President was his promise to maintain all that was necessary for national defence. Under these conditions, and thanks to his outstanding qualities, he may render great services to his country, but he is too clever not to know that reactions are frequent in public opinion here, and that there is no country where the Tarpeian Rock is so near to the Capitol."

And, a few days later, in allusion to the appointment of M. Delcassé to St. Petersburg:

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[1] Belgian papers.

"The personality of M. Delcassé is well known and very significant. He is one of those who forged the Franco-Russian Alliance and even more the Anglo-French friendship. The circumstances of his being obliged to leave the Quai d'Orsay are in everyone's memory, but when a few years later he became Minister of Marine, his return to power was not looked askance at in Germany. Last month the friends of this statesman repeated this with an idea that M. Delcassé might become an outside candidate for the Presidentship. It was an open secret that he would have liked it, but many people feared that his selection would have an anti-German appearance. Is his appointment to St. Petersburg open to the same interpretation? I don't think so, but I know that M. Poincaré was pleased to affirm his intention to hold high his country's colours. In these troublous times for Europe this is the one danger of having M. Poincaré at the Élysée. It was under his Ministry that militarist feelings were re-awakened, and one can only hope that his practical mind, cold and purely political, will prevent him from any exaggerated notions in this respect. The very notable increase in German armaments which has taken place just when M. Poincaré comes to the Élysée will increase the danger of nationalist orientation in French policy."

There are one or two mistakes as well as a certain *naïveté* in these letters. Like some Belgians before the war, Baron Guillaume would have willingly accepted that, in face of the German armaments, France should have remained inert, and he dubbed as militarist and chauvinist a purely precautionary measure on our part. But he recognised that it was the Agadir *coup* which had really excited French susceptibilities, as it was the German armaments which had rendered us anxious. Nor did he ignore that at the same moment the Belgian Government was equally anxious, and in the Grey Book which Belgium published in 1915, there is another letter in which M. Guillaume describes his explaining to M. Margerie that his country intended to have an army sufficiently strong to protect its independence and neutrality.

"M. Poincaré has assured me", he said then, "that France will never take the initiative to violate our neutrality, but if the German armies were to enter Belgium, and we were then not strong enough to expel them, the French Government would not hesitate to take the right steps to defend its own territory whether on the frontiers or whether, under the advice of the General Staff, to join issue with German forces."

Baron Guillaume's apprehensions were therefore largely shared by many of his compatriots, and he feared himself that his unhappy country would become the terrain of a European war. He was mistaken in attributing to me M. Delcassé's nomination ; it was M. Briand and M. Jonnart who conceived the idea, and told M. Fallières of it before telling me. As M. Delcassé had not voted for me at Versailles, it would have been bad taste on my part to have shown any grudge in this respect, and, as Baron Guillaume said himself, any bad feelings as to the Ambassador-elect no longer existed in Berlin.

After all, on 3rd March 1913, Baron Guillaume, in alluding again to the state of opinion in France, reported to his Minister :

"The German Ambassador has just said to me that the political situation is much improved in the last 48 hours. 'Everything seems much easier, and one may hope for an early return to peace conditions. But what does not improve is the state of public opinion in France and Germany with regard to the relations between the two countries. With us people think that a revival of chauvinism means an attack on the part of the Republic ; in France the same fear is entertained as regards ourselves. The consequence of this misunderstanding is to ruin us both, and I do not know where this dangerous path may lead us. Is there no one with sufficient goodwill and sufficient prestige to bring everybody back to their senses ? All this is the more ridiculous because, during the crisis we have been through, the two Governments have given evidence of the most pacific ideas, and are in close touch with one another to prevent any conflict from arising.' "

Baron Schoen did loyal justice to the perseverance of the French Government. Nor was Baron Guillaume ignorant of this, but he was afraid that in the general arming, of which Germany had given the first sign, inoffensive Belgium might well be crushed out of existence.

CHAPTER IV

[On the 13th March the debate on Electoral Reform opened in the Senate; five days later M. Briand tried to show that Minority Representation was a Republican idea, that M. Combes, M. Monis and M. Caillaux had included it in their programmes, and that some compromise must be found which would avoid a conflict between the two Chambers. The Prime Minister made the matter a question of confidence, and being defeated by 161 to 128 votes, immediately tendered his resignation. On 20th March, M. Barthou was charged with the formation of a Ministry, and the next day presented the President with his list. He himself besides the Premiership assumed the Ministry of Public Instruction, M. Etienne and M. Baudin retained their respective posts, M. Pichon returned to the Foreign Office, and M. Klotz exchanged the portfolio of Finance for that of the Interior.]

The formidable increase in German armaments—to which Baron Guillaume alluded—had, as the result of steady effort, assumed quite unexpected proportions. While France had reduced military service from three years to two (21st March 1905), and retroactively; while, under Clemenceau (1908), France reduced "refresher" courses for reservists, Germany, March 1911, raised by statute her effectives to 150,000 men in excess of ours. In May 1912, on the very morrow of the ratification by the Chambers of the Franco-German Convention of 4th November, 1911, a new law further raised German effectives by 37,000 men, while in October 1912 there was ordered an immediate application of the law of 1911, which according to text was not to have been fulfilled till the end of 1916; in January 1913 immediate application was ordered of the 1912 law, which was not due for completion till four years later. Our "Intelligence" got wind of still another law to raise effectives by 143,000 men, and, early in February, before I was installed at the Élysée, the War Minister told me how anxious our General Staff was about these German preparations. General Joffre thought the weakness of our covering forces might well become a positive danger, and urged that some measures of defence should be taken, as Germany would have a superiority of more than 35 per cent over us. While some of the newspapers cried aloud for a prompt reply to German armaments, the Socialist M. Jaurès protested against any such thing, and it oozed out in the Press that at the beginning of February six successive representative conferences, with Briand as chairman, had been held at the Ministry of the Interior.

The *Temps* came out as the champion of three years' service : "The time for half-measures has passed ; thirty months' service, voluntary re-engagements, etc., means loss of precious time". The War Office had under consideration a half-way measure, such as the three years being applied only for the cavalry and the horse artillery, but the General Staff insisted on a universal application of the term, while on the 27th February Etienne and Klotz announced to their colleagues a proposed credit of Frs. 500,000,000 to improve the equipment of the army ; on the 4th March the Ministers called in the chief military authorities to a meeting at the Élysée, when it was unanimously decided as absolutely necessary to increase our military strength, and when Etienne's three years' proposal was formally approved.

I, of course, exercised no sort of pressure on the Council, only recommending the Generals to study the political, financial and moral, as well as the military consequences of the decision they would register. They one and all complained of the inadequacy of our covering troops, which left us liable to be "rushed" by a sudden attack. The German frontier forces would have thirty men per company more than ours, and our cavalry was proportionately even weaker than our infantry. In face of this expert report the Cabinet decided on 6th March to bring in the statute re-establishing the three years' service without exceptions.

A howl went up from the German Press which had vigorously applauded the military measures adopted by their own Government. The centenary of 1813 was trotted out as an occasion for glorifying Prussia and disparaging France. The Kaiser, of course, was vocal: An Army Order of 10th March ran :

> " We also shall march joyously and confidently to battle, if it should ever be a question of preserving what has been won at the price of such precious blood and of defending the honour of Germany against anyone who shall dare to assail it."

Two days later a communiqué to the *North German Gazette* tried to pour oil on troubled waters, and to explain away an Imperial rhapsody. Emphasis was laid on the improvement in the European situation, while Germany's increased armaments were denied as being anything of a menace. The Balkan War, it was explained, had upset the balance of power and had necessitated readjustments, and with no guarantee for permanent peace Germany must envisage having to defend simultaneously from many sides her far-flung frontiers when it would be a matter of fighting for her existence.

So, at the moment when Germany is about to take such steps as will further increase the disproportion between her troops and ours, she does not deny—as she does a week later—that she is the first to swell her armies. The Balkan Crisis, the European changes which have intervened, the anxieties of her Ally—are the plea for her decision. She does not suggest that France has gone ahead of her in increasing armed forces.

Our numerical military inferiority was so marked that the Budget Commission of the Chamber must speed up its scrutiny of the War Minister's programme of extraordinary expenses, and a credit of Frs. 420,000,000 was registered on 18th March. Jules Cambon drew the special attention of Jonnart to memoranda drawn up by his naval and military attachés. Germany's innovations—he himself wrote—had met with an unexpected answer in the revival of the Three Years' Service in France. The German Government was exploiting this as a reason for increasing the German forces, whereas the burden which France was shouldering was due

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to the lead Germany had given. The Imperial Authorities were never tired of exalting patriotic feelings. The Kaiser delighted in recalling 1813 to memory, and inflamed public opinion was likely to be reflected in the Reichstag next month. It was an abuse of history, the writer suggested, to compare 1813 with 1913; if the movement which then fired the German people to oppose the man who aspired to the hegemony of the world could find a parallel, it was in France that this might be looked for.

Some days later our War Office got hold of a report of March 19th, drawn up by Colonel Ludendorff, an important member of the General Staff. I gave a copy to General Beaudemoulin, who showed it to me again the day before the war broke out with his note:

"Report on the German plan of attack communicated in 1913. The Germans seem to be carrying out their plan precisely."

Embedded in the document is the phrase:

"Our new military law is nothing but an extension of the military work of the German people. Our ancestors made very great sacrifices in 1813; it is our sacred duty to sharpen the sword which has been put into our hand and have it ready to defend ourselves and strike at an enemy. We must saturate our people with the idea that our armaments are a reply to those of France. They must be trained to the idea that a great offensive on our part is necessary to deal with the provocations of the enemy. Things must be so engineered that an outbreak of war (*Losschlagen*) will be considered a deliverance from a heavy burden of armaments and a tense political situation. Trouble must be stirred up in Russia and in Northern Africa, and we must aim at taking the offensive in overwhelming strength the first days. For this we shall need a great army strongly backed by Landwehr which will either bring the small States to our side or cause them to be neutral, or enable us to squash them if they resist. By the end of 1914 we shall have upwards of 800,000 men under the colours, and the companies of the Frontier Corps will be raised from 200 to 270 men. . . . We shall thus secure the most favourable conditions for a strategic surprise, as well as for the conduct of—and a rapid conclusion to—the campaign undertaken."

In the late days of March, and just after the fall of M. Briand's Cabinet, M. Delcassé was due to take up his post at

St. Petersburg, and I handed to him a letter[1] for the Czar in which I alluded to the "great military effort France is now contemplating in order to preserve the balance of European forces". This phrase suffices to show how far the ex-Kaiser strayed from the truth when he stated in his *Tableaux d'histoire* that I promised the Czar our Three Years' Service when I was in Russia in 1912.

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[1] Black Book.

CHAPTER V

On his return to the Quai d'Orsay, Stephen Pichon found a formidable task waiting for him. In the Near East grave questions were at issue; the Porte had accepted European mediation, but the Balkan Allies would only agree under conditions which Austria might not accept. They wanted Scutari, together with Adrianople; Austria insisted that Scutari must remain Albanian. Besides the crucial question of the Ægean Isles, the Allies demanded an indemnity from Turkey: whereas the Powers insisted that they should take over a proportionate share of the Ottoman Debt.[1] Vienna, wishing to stand well with both countries, urged Bulgaria to cede Silistria to Roumania with the promise that she would help Ferdinand to squeeze Salonika out of Greece. Austria must have known that she was thus adding fuel to fire, and at the same time she made a pretext of the Montenegrin bombardment of Scutari for an independent protest at Cettigne and for a despatch of warships. Russia rather excitedly urged a counter-demonstration by French and British, a suggestion which did not appeal to Paul Cambon.

Pichon was wise enough to remonstrate quietly with Count Szecsen as to any isolated action, and at the same time to support Austria in her demands that the bombardment of Scutari should cease and the civilian population be evacuated.

But Isvolsky day after day called at the Quai d'Orsay to insist on our not leaving the Austrian fleet by itself in the Adriatic. "How do you expect us to send ships to the Montenegrin coast? . . . Do you want us to look as if we were coercing a Slav population?" queried Pichon. "Your people would never forgive us." And on Isvolsky declaring that Russia could do nothing in the way of coercion, Pichon said : " Well, then, give us a mandate to take your place ; otherwise we could not justify ourselves either in Slav or in French opinion ".

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. i. Nos. 164, p. 107, and 171, pp. 111, 116; No. 178, p. 114; Nos. 178 and 179.

While the Powers talked, the Allies acted. The Bulgars and Serbs took Adrianople, and with the Greek success at Janina, the Turks went to pieces, and Montenegro's appetite was sharpened. Baron de Schoen told Pichon that if trouble came over Scutari Germany would willingly suggest that Austria and Italy should act on behalf of Europe ; did we agree ? Pichon said : " Yes, if all the Powers would say the same, anything except isolated action." [1] Meanwhile the Austrian Ambassador in London was telling Sir Edward Grey that the Montenegrin Military Council had decided to storm Scutari, that the fall of the town would signalise a massacre of the Christians, and that something must be done. Grey merely answered that Serbia was being advised to withdraw her troops and that Montenegro could not do very much by herself.

But it was not only Montenegro whose appetite grew with Balkan victories. Sazonoff wanted Bulgaria to have a larger slice of the good things than the Powers had allotted her ; Russia, if only to prevent Montenegro doing violence to Scutari, would not object to some such naval demonstration as a blockade of Antivari, but she could take no active part in this as she had no warships in the Mediterranean. The French Government on the 1st April decided we could only act in concert with the other Powers.

Many of the French papers asserted that under no conditions should we make any demonstration at all, and could not see why we should hold Montenegro off Scutari. They did not see that with Diakovo and Prizrend being given by the London Conference to the Allies, Vienna had come to the end of her concessions. It has been well said [2] that the Triple Alliance would have preferred war to the partition of Albania by Serbs, Bulgars and Montenegrins, and that such war would have been fought under conditions which favoured Austria. Germany would have been at Austria's side ; England would certainly not have helped Russia, and France might have been dragged into a very unequal struggle.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 183, 184, 185, 189.

By M. Auguste Gauvain, *Les Origines de la guerre européenne.*

We had to walk warily. Nor did we know then, as we learnt later through Giolitti and Tittoni, what Austria's precise intentions were. The Austrian Ambassador had been told to suggest to Italy that the two countries should, without the knowledge of the Powers, compel Montenegro to raise the siege of Scutari. The Italian Foreign Minister was inclined to agree to this from fear of Austria's acting alone, but the Italian Prime Minister put his foot down and said a naval demonstration would be a farce unless troops were landed, or might mean a European war ; any serious demonstration in the Balkans would, he thought, decide Russia to attack Austria, and if Italy had a finger in it she would be dragged into war ; Germany, Giolitti was sure, wanted peace and so did not want a demonstration, but if this occurred, Germany would like Italy to take a hand so as to be forced into the big struggle.

Despite this rebuff Austria returned to the charge once and again, but the Italian Premier stood his ground ;[1] and meanwhile Serbia, bowing to the Powers, withdrew her troops from the suburbs of Scutari—a concession made to Austria not only by Serbia but by Russia and France. The proposed naval demonstration thus lost its purport, for Serbia, not Montenegro, was Austria's real target. The

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[1] " Reserving a final reply I think for the moment (1) that we should not act alone or only with Austria without a mandate from the European Powers. (2) That we should do everything to avoid being vested with such a mandate either by leaving it to the European Powers to act in concert or at the least by assuring ourselves that England will participate. (3) As neither Scutari nor the Straits of Corfu are worth the risk of a European war we should not mix ourselves up with it unless there be some serious interest or the *casus foederis* should enjoin it. (4) Austria wants to compromise us so as to be sure of our intervention ; we must avoid any such trap.

" To sum up, we must avoid provoking a European war and if this should occur we must have no responsibility for it nor be implicated in it. Everything else is of no value to us and I am never going to pull the chestnuts out of the fire to save someone else's fingers."—Giolitti to San Giuliano.

Austrian Ambassador next proposed to the Consulta that some cash should be forthcoming for the ruler of the Black Mountain to prevent his joining himself on with Serbia, and he let slip to the Foreign Minister how much he regretted that Serbia's docility deprived Austria of an opportunity of attacking her. "I cannot share M. de Merey's regrets," Giolitti laconically telegraphed. So, whilst the Ambassadors' Conference was rather truckling to Austria's Albanian demands, Giolitti[1] notes that the pugnacity of the Dual Monarchy was manifesting itself anew. Austria for the moment had won her way. A naval demonstration before Antivari had been agreed upon in principle, and the Ballplatz had been very forward with a naval division for Antivari. The Czar had telegraphed in strong terms to King Nicholas that he must give way; Nicholas, according to Sazonoff, did not mind setting the world ablaze so as to boil his egg.[2] Sazonoff failed to get Sir Edward Grey to agree to any British action without France, and thanks to Sir George Buchanan and Delcassé, he decided to publish that Russia wanted France and England to co-operate in a naval demonstration; the captain of the *Edgar Quinet*, then at Corfu, was at once ordered to arrange with the British ships to proceed together to Antivari. It was high time, for Austria had already sent a regiment to the spot, and if the soldiers disembarked, the *Breslau* would surely land men to prove how loyal Germany was to her Ally. Austria pressed her advantage; she asked for an ultimatum to Montenegro, and this, for the sake of a united front, was agreed on, but with qualified terms respecting the proposed blockade.[3]

Silistria was another burning question, which had been tackled by a conference at St. Petersburg on 1st April. The German, Austrian and Italian Ambassadors supported Roumanian claims, pointing out that Roumania had been the only Balkan state which had deferred to the counsel of Europe in not troubling the *status quo*. Austria, careless as to whether she sowed dissension between Greece and Bulgaria, suggested that Bulgaria might have Salonika as a *quid pro quo* for what she gave up to Roumania. Buchanan stoutly opposed this.

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[1] *Mémoires* of Giolitti.

[2] Yellow Book, telegram from Delcassé, 2nd April 1913, Nos. 204, 205.

[3] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 207, 210, 211, 216 and 218. The blockade was to be pacific, *i.e.* any ship attempting to force it could be seized but not sunk or confiscated, and the blockade was only to apply to the strip between Antivari and the mouth of the Drin; a further delay was to be given.

> "Bulgaria owes nothing; she has bought with her blood whatever advantages she has obtained. If Roumania claims any part of Bulgarian gain it is because she thinks she is strong enough to impose such claim. England cannot admit that Might is Right; Roumania must be content with strategic advantages."

Delcassé would not hear of Salonika being wrested from Greece, and Sazonoff thought Roumania should be satisfied with what she would gain strategically. But the Triple Entente, to be conciliatory, agreed to the cession of Silistria and that Bulgaria should raise no forts along the frontier from Silistria to the sea if Roumania would disavow any territorial claims and indemnify any Bulgarian inhabitants who wanted to quit the town. One difficulty after another cropped up. The Balkan Allies went stubbornly on with their impossible conditions as regards Turkey. The Enos-Midia line was to be a "basis" for negotiations, not a definite frontier; they, not Europe, were to have the Ægean Isles; there must be a war indemnity, and so on.[1] Pichon was afraid of peace being delayed and so of what might happen if the Bulgars were to take Constantinople; he suggested that the Powers might show themselves all at once at the Dardanelles, Rodosto and Constantinople. Russia shook her head, but agreed to a categorical warning being sent by the Triple Entente to Bulgaria—Sazonoff giving fresh proof of loyalty by telling the German Ambassador that even if the Montenegrins took Scutari, Russia would not depart from the European decision to give the place to Albania.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 214, also 220, 225-227, 228, 229, 238, 239.* Germany argued that as the naval action had not prevented the fall of Scutari more or less platonic measures would not lead to its evacuation. Montenegro would never agree to abandon Scutari in exchange for the only compensations available, *i.e.* such as were not made at the expense of Albania — which was as far as Austria was prepared to go. King Nicholas would yield to nothing but force.

* See p. 46.

This was all the greater credit to him in view of the pro-Slav demonstrations in St. Petersburg which the Russian Government had been obliged to suppress.

At the very moment of an armistice on the Chataldja lines, and an agreement over Silistria, the Balkan Allies began to quarrel, the Greeks and Bulgars squabbled over Salonika, the Serbs and Bulgars over the line of the Vardar and the frontiers of Albania. Negotiations between Montenegrins and Essad Pasha led to the capitulation of Scutari on 22nd April, and the London Conference proposed that King Nicholas should surrender the place to naval representatives of the Powers. But this was viewed with dismay in St. Petersburg. Sazonoff changed his tune, and according to Isvolsky, thought that the fall of Scutari changed the situation, that Montenegro must not be bullied and that Nicholas should be compensated for the loss of the town. Paul Cambon protested against this to Benckendorff, and Pichon in his protest to St. Petersburg emphasised the value of our close amity with England. Happily Sazonoff " thought better " of his proposal, and confined himself to a pious hope that if Nicholas submitted, some compensation would be awarded him.

Germany, on the other hand, warned us that Austria's patience was at breaking-point, and Europe must not let Montenegro make her look " ridiculous before the world and posterity ". Berlin thought the measures of coercion proposed by the Ambassadors inadequate.[1] Neither the blockade nor the dangled compensations had made much impression on Montenegro, and if all the Powers would not agree to impose a twenty-four hour term on King Nicholas to do what he was told, a mandate might be given to Austria or Italy to carry out what Europe had laid down. Germany's Note was couched in so rough a tone as to prove once more that it was the " brilliant second " who was setting the tune. Paul Cambon disfavoured any military campaign against Montenegro; Sir Edward Grey suggested that King Nicholas might be told reasonable compensations would be considered after he had submitted to the will of the Powers and evacuated Scutari, and that otherwise Europe would have nothing to do with him. We entirely agreed with Sir Edward Grey's suggestion, and believing that there was as much fear of some rash act at Vienna as of a bubbling over of opinion at St. Petersburg, Pichon asked Berchtold to temporise and Sazonoff to cool things down.

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[1] *Vide* footnote, p. 45.

Sazonoff feared that if we turned our backs on Montenegro Russia would not like it, and Austria's ambitions would be encouraged. The Powers, however, adopted something very like Grey's formula and forwarded it to Cettigne; Sazonoff said he was satisfied, and on the 5th May King Nicholas, after a pompous pronouncement as to his sacred rights, bowed to the decree of Europe.

The successes won by the Allies did not bear full fruit for them; Serbia had been obliged to renounce the Adriatic coast, Montenegro had to give up Scutari, Greece must abandon hope of the Ægean Isles, the Bulgars must halt on their road to Constantinople.

The cession of Scutari eased matters for a moment, but Essad Pasha, having voluntarily surrendered the place to King Nicholas, started with 25,000 well-equipped troops for Albania, where it was said he was about to proclaim himself the Prince. How would Vienna take this?

She had stood out for the autonomy of Albania, invoking the principle of nationalities, for which at home she had little use but which she considered an excellent article for exportation. Now Albania, for whose birth Europe was responsible, seemed to want to choose her own chief. How would the claim, which threatened to disturb so many combinations, be received at the Ballplatz?

CHAPTER VI

While the French Government, piloted by the Foreign Minister, was carefully steering its course among the reefs, I must spend a considerable part of my time in feasts and functions. Of the former, one of the most agreeable was a *déjeuner* which, on the 1st April, we offered to the King and Queen of the Belgians who were staying in Paris in semi-incognito. King Albert seemed no less anxious than myself as to current events, but he seemed also to think the Kaiser would try to play up to France's conciliatory spirit, and that he would be proof against the pan-Germanic influences which beset him. A few days later the new Spanish Ambassador, M. de Villa Urrutia, presented his credentials and assured me of the real sympathy with France which was felt both by the King and the Spanish people ; the Franco-Spanish treaty as to Morocco had just been passed without any opposition in both Parliaments, and the bonds between the two countries had thus been happily tightened. A week earlier King Alfonso had barely escaped from assassination, some wretched individual having fired a revolver point-blank at him in Madrid. The king had not been hurt, but his horse was wounded, the excitement was intense, and the message of congratulation which I sent him was very well received.

In April also there came to Paris the Prince of Wales, whom I found less shy and more " grown-up " than last year, and the King of Sweden, who brought me the Order of the Seraphim, and who told me how glad he had been to spend some weeks on our Côte d'Azur. Better still, Sir Francis Bertie came to the Élysée to announce that the King would welcome me with great pleasure to London towards the end of June, and I was thus able to do as Loubet and Fallières had done and let my first official foreign visit be to Great Britain. Neither these social obligations nor the deep sorrow which came to me in the death of my dear mother could deflect one's mind from the danger signals which seemed to grow and grow, and the German enigma was what more and more forced itself on our attention. One could not disguise from oneself that throughout the Empire popular passion was daily increasing, and that the propaganda of the pan-Germanic and military leagues was becoming more intense. General Liebert, member of the Reichstag, was giving addresses as to German desire for power and as to the absolute necessity of carrying out a policy of expansion and of strength; General Keim was indulging in inflammatory language, and General von Wrochem was writing in the *Danziger Neueste Nachrichten*:

> "It is the resounding smack in the face at Morocco which has shown up our military weakness. A people constantly progressing and developing like ours needs new territories in which to expand, and if peace cannot furnish these territories, then recourse must be made to war."

The *Berliner Tageblatt*, rather more wisely, wrote on the 21st April:

> "If the Government, the Reichstag and the people have not the courage to break away from the pan-Germanists, the Empire will end by being choked in a morass of armaments and then no official pacific policy will be of any use."

But this advice was not followed. On the 10th February, long before M. Briand had proposed our Three Years' Service, the *Frankfurt Gazette* had published a note:

> "The session of the Central Committee of the National Liberal Party was presided over to-day by M. Bassermann who spoke of exterior politics and painted the international situation in dark colours; he urged greater military strength, and cried out for a really active policy."

On the 13th March an appeal from the German Military League appeared in the *Tägliche Rundschau*:

> "The Emperor and the Chancellor have announced a new and extensive military law and the German people will have to

face a grave decision. A year ago the Reichstag adopted, with cheerful acquiescence, the increase of the Army proposed by the Government.

" The Military League has never ceased to say the reinforcements laid down were insufficient, and five months ago it used these words: ' The present serious situation compels us to make up time lost. No one in his senses can believe that the shifting of power in the Balkans will not be felt in the whole European system. The way in which the campaign concluded means a very serious and continual danger for Austria. Peace will be restored ; but still the Hapsburg Monarchy may have to fight for its very existence. Our lot is bound up with hers, and the fall of Austria will expose Germany to the greatest danger.' "

The Crown Prince, who was then thirty-two, was openly posing as a militarist. The Socialist Deputy Liebknecht had even complained of this in the Reichstag, but had only been called to order by the President and his question had done nothing to prevent the heir to the Crown from signing the preface of a military book and writing in it : " Until the end of the world the sword will be and will remain the supreme and the decisive factor ".

Prince Bülow had, however, himself clearly stated that from 1908 Germany had no sort of reason to think of herself as encircled, and this outbreak of Pan-Germanism was therefore without any excuse. Day by day we did everything on our side to arrest it, not only by giving, in the course of any negotiation, the fullest consideration to German and Austrian desires, but by every little amenity which any particular occasion could suggest. Thus when on the 5th March a most unhappy accident in Heligoland caused the death of several sailors, I at once telegraphed to the Kaiser the expressions of my most sincere condolence, and received in answer a very courteous, if not very effusive, reply.

Less than a month later, on the 3rd of April, a Zeppelin with three German officers on board, starting from Friedrichshafen on a trial trip, flew over Belfort and then over the Haute Saône and Vosges along the French fortified frontier, finally descending in the early afternoon, short of petrol and slightly damaged, near the manœuvre ground of Lunéville. The flight, besides being rather a suspicious affair, was in flagrant disregard of the decree of 1911 as to aerial navigation. On landing, the airship was at once looked after by our people and permission given to telegraph to the German society as to what had happened; a short report was then drawn up by General Hirschauer, and within twenty-four hours of its abrupt advent on French territory the dirigible and its occupants were making their way by air and train back to their country. Germany at first seemed a little touched by our behaviour, and Baron Schoen was instructed to write a note of very cordial thanks. But scarcely had the dirigible got to Metz or the officers arrived at Strasbourg before the tone changed, and not only was there in the German Press a chorus of imprecation against France, but the German Government sent the Ambassador to complain of what the French authorities had done, of hostile demonstrations on the part of some of the onlookers, and of insulting things which had been written on the machine. Three days later there began in the Reichstag the debate on the new military law, and it was obvious that the Zeppelin was cast to play a part in securing a vote. The Chancellor congratulated himself on the good relations between Germany and Russia, but complained that the Balkan victories had been treated as a success for Slav ideas. A little later on he announced that there was every reason to think that the present French Government wished to live in harmony with the German Empire, but as this pronouncement scarcely fitted in with the German military project, he hastened to add that no one knew what the future might have in store, and then after a side blow, not only at those who were designated as chauvinists but at any Frenchman who, according to the speaker, held his country in too high esteem, he informed the Assembly that "the French with their lively temperament have read into the Turkish defeats German defeats as also the superiority of French instructors over German. France has taken for granted the support of the Balkan States and of Alsace-Lorraine, and in her illusion has already won the war."

On the morrow of the debate there occurred the unfortunate incident which Hollweg's oratory did perhaps something to provoke. Seven Germans, who had come from Metz to Nancy, were chaffed and annoyed by some French students in a beer-hall, and what began as a rather silly political demonstration degenerated into an unseemly scuffle at the railway station. So little effect, however, did this rough and tumble have at Nancy that the Prefect did not even think it necessary to inform the Government, while the Germans on arrival at Metz submitted the whole affair in most lurid colours. Eventually Herr Jagow in the Reichstag tried to turn a nocturnal local squabble into an international quarrel, and caught at the opportunity for inveighing against alleged French chauvinism. Formal complaint was made by the German Embassy to the Quai d'Orsay, and as a result of an exhaustive inquiry, the Prefect of Nancy and the responsible police officers were reduced in status. This step was probably one further than circumstances demanded, but it was taken in order to warn all officials that any incident in a big town might, if Germans were involved, assume a serious character, and also to keep all public servants in the East on their guard so as to prevent any sort of occurrence of an inflammatory character.

In spite of this, the Gallophobe German Press was more open-mouthed than ever, and the *Deutscher Tageszeitung* and the *Post* declared that the French Government should officially express regret, a recommendation which, however, the Cabinet at Berlin would not accept, and declared the incident to be closed.

There were other pin-pricks to follow. On the 20th some German officers, who had under their charge a section of Boy Scouts, thought it a good joke to bring their party with its band and its flags on to French soil. Two days later a German biplane crossed the frontier and descended at Arracourt, but as the navigating officers alleged that they had been lost in a fog and had crossed into France unawares, they were officially recognised to have acted in good faith and allowed to depart without interference. The courtesy shown by France was indeed regarded in many quarters as excessive and as contrasting unfavourably with the hostility and mistrust exhibited toward French officers in Germany. The French Ambassador was directed to draw the attention of the German Government to the repeated aerial visits, but while Herr Jagow fully acknowledged the complaint, the only noticeable result was an increased haste in Germany to pass the new military bills.

The following day the Kaiser arrived at Metz with a large suite and there appeared in the *Lorraine* an article from a loyal Lorrainian which testified anew to the resignation and prudence of the annexed people (21st April).

> " William II. arrives to-day in our Lorraine and will this evening be the guest of the town of Metz. Let him be made welcome. His soldiers, whom he has come to see and to encourage, will receive him with the discipline, the respect and the satisfaction which are becoming. The civil population will greet him with the hope that he shares their desires and their need of peace. In our Alsace-Lorraine we have no wish for war; our experience in this respect has been far too painful."

The first week in May was marked by three happy occasions. On the 5th the representative of the Argentine Republic called to thank me for having sent M. Baudin with a mission to Buenos Aires to congratulate the Republic on the centenary of its independence. On the following day both the French and Italian Press expressed entire satisfaction with the award of the Hague Tribunal in respect of the unfortunate *Carthage* and *Manouba* affair,[1] and a happy close was therefore put to an incident which might have issued in protracted ill-feeling. And on the former day (5th) the King of Spain marked his approval of our Morocco agreement by paying a visit to Paris. He had not been here for eight years, when he had captivated all hearts with his youthful appearance, his charm of manner, his perfect simplicity and his keen sympathy with France due—as he reminded us—to the Bourbon blood which ran in his veins. He arrived in the morning and had a fine ovation both at the Bois de Boulogne station and all the way to the Quai d'Orsay, the only untoward incident being a foolish cry of

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[1] Two French ships which had been detained by Italy, *vide* vol. i. p. 21.

" Vive Ferrer " from one or two persons in the crowd. " Ah, that wretched affair ", the King said to me ; " as if a constitutional Sovereign were free to act as he pleased and was not constantly obliged to conform to the wishes of the Government." An inspection of the garrison troops on the Esplanade des Invalides, a visit to the École Militaire, a reception of the Diplomatic Corps, an hour spent with his mother-in-law the Princess Henry of Battenberg, and a big dinner at the Élysée filled up the evening programme ; to the dinner we specially invited M. and Madame Caillaux, in order to remove from the King's memory the last signs of his annoyance in 1911, and the British and Austrian Ambassadors on account of the family relations of their Sovereigns to the King. In the course of the evening we heard that the Czar had announced his intention of going to Berlin for the royal marriage, and while King Alfonso and I[1] were addressing one another in terms which breathed peace, the Kaiser was reminding the Mecklenburg Artillery of their splendid courage in the bloody campaign of 1870. " I am certain ", was his peroration, " that if there is again a question of defending German honour and German power against the foreigner, the Mecklenburg Artillery will add fresh laurels to those it has already gained."

The next day was spent at Fontainebleau, and King Alfonso, one of the finest horsemen in Spain, himself mounted on a splendid bay charger, delighted in some cavalry exercises in the morning, and in the afternoon thoroughly enjoyed an outdoor tournament in the great natural circus of La Carrière. His last words before leaving us on the following morning were : " The welcome which Paris has given me will never be erased from my memory and will go to increase the affection which I have always felt for your beautiful country ". During his stay, the King and I had no political talk except as to the Franco-Spanish collaboration in Morocco and this agreeably with what M. Pichon and Count de Romanones were saying to one another. Our Foreign Minister and I assured the Spanish Government that we would continue heartily with them to speed up the pacification of the two zones and that General Lyautey would go through Madrid so as to fix up the details of our joint work. As to the Near East I told King Alfonso, as Pichon told Romanones, that far from having any hostile feeling towards Austria we would do all we could to maintain European peace.

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[1] " . . . Les longues et courtoises négociations qui ont abouti aux récentes conventions auraient, s'il en avait besoin, préparé l'Espagne et la France à se mieux connaître et à s'estimer davantage. Ce n'est pas d'hier que les deux grandes nations voisines ont compris l'étroite solidarité de leurs intérêts et les raisons permanentes de leur amitié traditionnelle. Mais en collaborant désormais avec une mutuelle confiance à une œuvre de civilisation et de paix elles verront plus clairement que jamais dans leur voisinage une leçon de la nature et dans leur parenté la loi de leurs destinées."

CHAPTER VII

OUR Three Years' Service met with opposition from the Socialists and Radicals, the latter wanting to dock six months. Léon Bourgeois, who could look back to 1870, would vote for the project. Clemenceau, critical and satirical on other points, congratulated us in this matter on taking time by the forelock. The Government decided to put this measure into immediate operation, and the Chamber approved it by a majority of 167, Thursday, 15th May; Caillaux, at a Radical-Socialist banquet, three days after the majority in the Chamber, though pronouncing the Three Years excessive, recognised that the democracy could not evade the duties imposed by the international situation. The retention of men under the colours was exploited by agitators, and there was trouble in the barracks at Toul, Mâcon, Nancy and Rodez, where anarchist leaflets had been freely distributed. Disciplinary measures had to be taken which had their echo in the Chamber; a warm discussion arose over the vote for the supplementary military credit, and so dragged out was the debate over the Three Years' Service Bill that extra sessions had to be arranged; the Reichstag, on the other hand, on the 13th June quite easily passed a law under which the German army enjoyed its largest increase since 1871, and would have 876,000 men on a peace footing. Their respective military arrangements did nothing to hinder the two Governments either in their efforts to smooth away Balkan troubles, or to mar the exchange of official courtesies. King George and the Czar were at the moment in Berlin for the marriage of the Kaiser's only daughter to the son of the Duke of Cumberland, and my own telegram of congratulations met with a perfectly courteous answer—the same thing happening on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Kaiser's accession.

Through June and till mid-July our Three Years' Service absorbed attention in the Chamber; on the 19th Caillaux recited the declaration of the minority, the malcontents[1] recording 204 votes against the 358 which carried the Bill. M. Doumer, the *rapporteur*, proceeded to enunciate an exhaustive and most luminous statement as to German armaments from which emerged the irresistible question: "Have we the right to leave our army in such numerical inferiority?" If so, it was urged, France must lose her position as a Great Power, must abandon her historical and political traditions, and fail in her part of maintaining the equilibrium of Europe. She would become an easy and tempting prey and would be well on her way to lose her independence and her existence, having already sacrificed her honour. The figures spoke for themselves, and a difference of over 300,000 men was what was at issue. Fortified further by Doumer's careful analysis, which proved that nothing less than the Three Years' Service could meet the case, the Senate on the 7th August passed the measure into law by a majority of over 200.

Two days later the Peace of Bucharest was signed, and curiously enough, on the same day King Constantine of Greece was made a German Field-Marshal. While Pichon continued to preach, and practise, the gospel of the European concert,[2] Isvolsky was as talkative and as restless as ever. An Imperial Rescript seems to him to favour Germany rather than France, so he must write to Sazonoff:

> "You know how sensitive they are here as to our relations with Germany and how anxiously they watch the Czar's visits to Berlin."[3]

So in 1913 he makes France say what he always made out that I said in 1912, and now moreover he has a dig at most of his colleagues; there was no good word to be said for Sevastopoulo, Raffalovitch was terribly touchy and suffered from swelled head, and so on. Happily Sazonoff did not allow himself to be carried away by any of this.

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[1] M. Messimy and Paul Boncour moved an amendment that the service for infantry should be 28 months, with 30 months for the mounted arm.

[2] The German and pro-German American writers, even if they do not accept Pichon's own testimony, need only skim through Stieve or the Black Book to be assured that he was walking in 1913 precisely the same path as Jonnart and I had done.

[3] Black Book, vol. ii., Letter from Isvolsky, 6th/19th June, p. 98.

By the end of May the Balkan Allies were openly at loggerheads; Daneff told Paul Cambon that Bulgaria, agreeably with the treaty of Sofia, would refer her case with Serbia to the Czar, but her differences with Greece must be settled by the Powers. The Greeks, meanwhile, complained that the Bulgars were concentrating 70,000 men between Doiran and Sérès; Serbia feared that, after having smashed the Greek Army, Bulgaria would turn upon her.[1] The Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin pronounced fighting to be inevitable, skirmishing was already going on, and a Serbian division was under orders to support the Greeks. At this hectic moment Turkey signed peace preliminaries at London, giving to the Balkans everything in Europe west of a line from Enos to Midia; Albania was left to the decision of the Powers, Crete was to go to Greece, and the Ægean Isles question was left on the lap of the Powers. While the ink was wet on the signatures, there was a squabble at St. James's Palace which showed the lack of agreement between the Balkan Allies. Guéchoff had met Paschitch at Czaribrod, and had arranged that if the four Balkan Premiers could not settle matters between themselves, Russia should be asked to arbitrate, the Czar meanwhile telegraphing to Kings Ferdinand and Peter to do nothing without asking him.[2]

Stancioff told Pichon point blank that Bulgaria meant to have Monastir, Vodena, Kastoria, Ostrovo, Ochrida, and that the Czar's arbitrage had nothing to do with Monastir and the surrounding country; Pichon said that if such were Bulgaria's attitude, she would get no loan.[3]

Ferdinand professedly accepted arbitration, but whilst Paschitch and the others were arranging to go to St. Petersburg, Daneff was shuffling with Sazonoff. Serbia now protested that Russia was favouring Bulgaria, and Paschitch

[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 301, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 311, 314, 315.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. ii., No. 321.

[3] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 327, 333, 343, 344, 347.

resigned. Two changes of Ministers hampered our efforts both at Buda Pesth and Sofia. Guéchoff was replaced by Daneff, and the Hungarian Premier, Lukacs, gave place to a Magyar politician, Count Etienne Tisza, who was as anti-Slav as he was pro-German. Turkey meanwhile declined to demobilise, snapped her fingers at the treaty, and, knowing that Austria and Germany would back her, proposed to exploit the Balkan troubles to get back some of the ground she had given up.

This was the moment chosen by Bulgaria to pounce suddenly on Serbia, and, on the night of the 24th June, 600 regular troops attacked the Serbian advanced post at Kratovo. Sazonoff thought that Ferdinand was secretly encouraged by Austria,[1] and, as a matter of fact, Paschitch, having withdrawn his resignation, was just about to leave for St. Petersburg, when the armies of General Radko Dimitrief attacked the Serbian front all along the line and some confused but bloody fighting ensued.

Undoubtedly this onset was due to Bulgaria's desire to occupy and annex Macedonia. The Cabinet knew nothing of it; it had been secretly engineered by Ferdinand and General Savof, under the King's written order, and Daneff, as soon as he heard of it, ordered the cease fire. Ferdinand thought, of course, that he was doing just what Austria would like him to do, and Jonesco has told us that in May 1913 Prince Fürstenberg, the Austrian Minister at Bucharest, had to warn Roumania that, in the event of a Serbo-Bulgarian war, Austria would assist Bulgaria if necessary "by force of arms".[2] On the 27th June, Count Tarnowsky, Austrian Minister at Sofia, had a long drive and a long talk with Ferdinand, who then sent for Savof, and the following night the attack was ordered to be hurried on.

Bulgaria was as much an object of suspicion at Athens as at Belgrade, and Venizelos begged us to open Russia's eyes, as Bulgaria would play the same tricks on her as she had done to everyone else. Venizelos, wrote Cambon, is justified in saying that his Government was awaiting an attack, for he knew better than anyone else how entirely exposed his country was to it.[1] A delegate at the London Conference, he could not be unaware that Daneff, another delegate, was explicit that Bulgaria wanted Salonika and would have it even if she had to fight for it.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 361.

[2] *La Roumanie*, end of December 1914, beginning of January 1915.

Roumania now ordered her troops across the Danube, and Ferdinand, thinking prudence the better part of valour, withdrew his men and gave over the Turtukaï-Baltchik frontier: things began to look ugly for him, and he must eat humble pie. On the 16th July, Stancioff came to claim, in the name of his King, the good offices of France to bring about peace: with the Roumanians in Varna there would surely be a rising in Sofia. I could simply say that France would do all she could to secure a speedy settlement, and I notified all other Governments of the interview.

Bulgaria's reverses caused the Government to fall. Radoslavists and Stamboulovists came into office with Dr. Guenadieff as Foreign Minister. The new Government would not officially admit defeat, and the Turks took advantage of the delay to march on Adrianople, seize it on 20th July, and announce their intention of holding the line of the Maritza. This the London Conference would not stand, and Sazonoff had already warned Turkhan Pasha that Russia, if necessary, would take up arms, while Pichon again protested against any isolated Russian action. The Ambassadors had differing ideas. Lichnowsky thought it "premature" to coerce the Porte, Tornielli suggested negotiations, Grey disliked any drastic measure. Despairing of a collective naval demonstration, Sazonoff now proposed that French, British and Russian ships should cruise before Constantinople, which Pichon said would mean the break up of the European concert.[2]

Grey, in order to quiet Russian nerves, suggested that negotiations might be opened up direct between St. Petersburg and Berlin, Russia to have carte blanche as against Turkey, but to swear to keep off Asia Minor. We, of course, were only too happy, and we said so plainly, to countenance so excellent a proposal.[1]

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 375, 376, 378, 379, 392.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. ii. No. 424.

St. Petersburg then applied to Berlin, Berlin turned to Vienna, Vienna said that Russia could do as she liked but that the Austrian Government must reserve to itself the right to do anything necessary to protect Bulgaria; more and more King Ferdinand and Count Berchtold played into one another's hands, and in the face of these difficulties, Sazonoff happily reconsidered what he had said.

Even Sir Edward Grey's almost unbounded patience was getting a little strained; he was tired, badly in need of a holiday, and suggested that the London Conference might be adjourned *sine die* as soon as the provisional Albanian arrangements had been made; Cambon feared that a break-off might look like a break-down, and proposed fortnightly meetings to which Pichon and I agreed;—anything to safeguard the concert of Europe.

The baffled Ferdinand was now on his knees to King Carol, begging him to hurry up with the peace. The delegates met at Bucharest, and Bulgaria having come to terms with Roumania on most points, then tried to get the latter to join her against the Serbs and Greeks. Cavalla was a point at issue; the Greeks were *beati possidentes*, the Bulgarians wanted to turn them out, Russia supported Bulgaria, the Kaiser, in domestic sympathy with King Constantine, was at the back of Greece. On August 2nd I received a telegram from Ferdinand which delightfully reflected his character; he reproached France for forgetting that French blood ran in his royal veins, he reproached the Balkan Allies for their "ingratitude" to Bulgaria, whose troops had treacherously attacked them, and he tried to sweeten me with rather clumsy compliments on our efforts for peace which were now universally recognised all over Europe. I merely sent a formal acknowledgment of the telegram; Pichon telegraphing to M. Blondel a clear outline of our policy, which was inspired by no unfriendly feeling towards Bulgaria but by the certainty that only concessions on her part could avert a new appeal to the sword Our one idea was to stop a war which might grow in dimensions, and we went so far as to take the part of Greece against Bulgaria, which really meant taking the part of Germany against Russia, with the hope of averting further hostilities. Our advice to Bulgaria scarcely pleased Russia, and a Press campaign was started at St. Petersburg against us, Pichon being finally obliged to ask Delcassé to smooth Sazonoff over. But while Sazonoff soon got over his temporary ill-humour and was at pains to stress his desire to avoid any isolated action, Austria grumbled at a peace which she thought too favourable for Serbia, and again contemplated an assault on her little neighbour.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. ii. Nos. 426, 427.

On the 5th December 1914 M. Giolitti told Parliament what had happened. On the 9th August M. San Giuliano had telegraphed to him :

> " Austria has just let us and Germany know that she intends to proceed against Serbia, and says that this is only acting on the defensive, hoping thus to claim the *casus foederis* of the Alliance which I do not think applies here. I am trying to arrange with Germany to stop this."

Giolitti replied that the *casus foederis* most certainly did not apply, and that the measure proposed by Austria must be taken entirely on her own responsibility, there being no necessity for her to defend herself as no one was attacking her. Austria must be informed of this in the clearest possible terms, and it was earnestly to be hoped that Germany would prevent her friend from doing anything so hazardous. At Italy's request, Germany did lay her hand on Austria's arm, the Kaiser not being disposed at this moment to use the same contemptuous expressions which in July 1914 he was to pencil on the margin of despatches. In 1913 he had many reasons for wishing to conclude the Treaty of Bucharest ; he did not wish to disoblige the Roumanian Hohenzollerns, and Carol, recognising this, sent him the well-known telegram :

> " Thanks to you peace will be established."

The treaty was signed at Bucharest, 10th August, between Roumania, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia on the one part and Bulgaria on the other, the last undertaking to reduce her Army to a peace footing. The treaty had scarcely been signed by the interested parties when the Vienna Cabinet spoke of it as not being final, and that it should be submitted to the Great Powers, the majority of whom—so it was intimated—did not approve of it. Russia seemed to have at the back of her mind some idea—by no means Austria's idea—of revision; Germany was afraid of displeasing Roumania, and the French Government at once agreed with the German Cabinet, so that Europe might register the decision come to at Bucharest. To-day most Germans have forgotten our untiring efforts, and M. Viviani must indignantly write in his *Reply to the Kaiser*:

> "Germany has not hesitated to allege even since the War that the Balkan affairs composed a vast plot engineered against Austria and Turkey by Russia with England, France and the Balkan States as her confederates. To refute such nonsense one need only peruse the published documents of the various Allied Governments and especially the three Yellow Books devoted to Balkan affairs. There will be found clear proof of the untiring efforts which were made by the Entente, and specially by France and M. Poincaré, to prevent the combat, then to limit it, and lastly to put a term to it."

But who opens the Yellow Book? There are, even in America, authors who prefer to read M. Fabre Luce or even M. Judet, and who think that with authorities such as these they are writing history.

CHAPTER VIII

My arrival in London is fixed for the 24th, and on the afternoon of the 23rd I leave Paris for Cherbourg, feeling a little depressed because I have never learnt a single word of English; I could not even read, in its original, the magnificent tribute which Rudyard Kipling addressed to France, and which the *Morning Post* published on my arrival:

> "Terrible with strength renewed from a tireless soil;
> Strictest judge of her own worth, gentlest of man's mind,
> First to face the Truth and last to leave old Truths behind—
> France, beloved of every soul that loves or serves its kind!"

A little before noon on the 24th we are within sight of Portsmouth, and six English and six French destroyers steam out to meet us. The *Courbet* has scarcely cast anchor when Sir Edward Poe and a party of officers step on board from the *Fire Queen* to pay their respects; they then take me on their boat to the southern jetty where a big tent has been put up. Here I am greeted by the Prince of Wales, in full naval uniform and wearing the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour which M. Fallières had given him on attaining his majority, and with him are our Ambassador, M. de Fleuriau, and Colonel de la Panouse, all in levee dress.

A programme which admitted of no variation prevented my stay at Portsmouth further than to receive an address from the Mayor and Aldermen, the first of the many beautifully illuminated documents which I was to receive. On the way up to London I enjoy a long talk with the Prince of Wales, who has lost none of his former delightful simplicity, but who has "come on" a good deal, and whose charm of manner and vivacity M. Pichon admires no less than myself.

At Victoria Station is the King with the Duke of Connaught and Prince Arthur; this is the first time I have seen His Majesty, and I am sharply struck by his resemblance to his Cousin of Russia, although King George is less pale in complexion, less dreamy in outlook, with a less sad smile and a less timid demeanour. The King gives me a hearty greeting, and having inspected with him the Guard of Honour, takes me to the gala landau, with its four horses and postilions, whose splendid scarlet and gold liveries put my black coat sadly into the shade. There is an immense crowd to cheer us outside the station, and the "Hurrahs" are kept up all the way to Buckingham Palace; in France I might sometimes have been tempted to forget that the popular greetings were due to my office and not to myself; in London one could have no such illusion; it was France who was being vociferously acclaimed, and for the enthusiastic Londoner I was only a top-hatted and white-tied symbol.

The King and the Prince of Wales accompany me to York House, where the same apartments are prepared for me which M. Loubet and M. Fallières had occupied. After the war the King and Queen were so good as to entertain Madame Poincaré and myself in Buckingham Palace itself, but in 1913 it was still the custom to lodge the French President in the rooms at St. James's Palace, where King George and Queen Mary had lived when Duke and Duchess of York, and where Lord Kitchener was to pass the last fifteen months of his life.

A few minutes in which to remove the traces of the journey from my democratic full dress, and then under an escort of Household Cavalry in review order I drive to Buckingham Palace to pay my respects to the King and Queen; thence with like purpose to Marlborough House where I find with the ever beautiful Queen Alexandra her sister the Dowager Empress of Russia. At Schomberg House I am received by Princess Christian, and at Clarence House the Duke and Duchess of Connaught are awaiting me; each member of the Royal Family vies with the others to make these official visits as easy and as agreeable as possible. At Albert Gate our Ambassador gives me the heartiest welcome and presents to me the French " colony ", whom I can thank for all that they have done in the cause of " peace and civilisation ".

At night a banquet in the great dining-room at the Palace, with its tables decorated with red, white and blue flowers and encircled by Yeomen of the Guard carrying their halberds and in their Tudor dress; on the great buffets the massive gold plate is flashing and sparkling under the electric lights. I sit between the King and Queen, the Crown Princess of Sweden being on the King's left; the Queen, in very fluent French, promises to accompany the King to Paris in the near future. The King speaks French as correctly as his Consort, but not having learnt it when quite young, with perhaps less ease. In proposing my health he renews his thanks to me for sending him the text of my speeches at Cannes, and expresses his keen satisfaction that in spite of the European difficulties which had been met with, the Great Powers have not relaxed their efforts for peace. My reply is on the same note, and I can say that France, like England, may congratulate herself on being able, in her labours for peace, to enjoy the constant co-operation of all the Chancelleries. In neither the King's speech nor mine is there a syllable to excite chauvinism in either France or in England, and it would indeed have been well if Wilhelm, when pronouncing an oration, had taken his cue from us.[1] After dinner I have some conversation with

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[1] KING'S SPEECH

Je suis on ne peut plus heureux, Monsieur le Président, de vous souhaiter la bienvenue dans ce pays et de vous dire combien je suis sensible à la courtoisie que vous me témoignez en me faisant visite si tôt après votre installation dans l'éminente et haute position que vous occupez.

Les rapports que nos deux nations voisines ont entre elles depuis bien des siècles ont permis à chacune de profiter de la culture intellectuelle et de la prospérité matérielle de l'autre: un accroissement progressif de respect, de bienveillance et

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

SIRE—Le cordial accueil que veut bien me faire Votre Majesté, les marques de sympathie qui me sont prodiguées, depuis mon arrivée, par le Gouvernement Royal, l'empressement que met le peuple de Londres à fêter le représentant de la France, provoqueront, chez mes compatriotes, un mouvement général de joie et de reconnaissance.

En saisissant avec gratitude l'occasion que Votre Majesté m'a si aimablement offerte de lui rendre visite dès cette année, je me suis tout à la fois proposé de lui donner à elle-même un gage de mes senti-

Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, as also with Mrs. Asquith whom I had already met in Paris at a little luncheon given by Gabriel Hanotaux.

The next morning is devoted to visits to the French Hospital, the French Institute, and the Home for French Governesses, and before leaving York House for the Guild-

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d'accord mutuel en est le résultat. Depuis la signature, en 1904, des actes diplomatiques, qui ont si amicalement mis un terme à nos différends, les deux nations ont coopéré harmonieusement et cordialement aux affaires d'un intérêt international, et elles se sont senties attirées l'une vers l'autre par un même intérêt à un but identique. Nos Gouvernements ont constamment en vue le maintien de la paix et les deux côtés nous nous efforçons de parvenir à ce noble but.

Ces derniers mois, lorsque de graves questions internationales se succédaient, l'esprit de confiance et de franchise mutuelle, avec lequel la France et la Grande-Bretagne ont abordé ces divers problèmes, a prouvé qu'il était davantage inestimable. Nous éprouvons une vive satisfaction à constater qu'en présence des difficultés sérieuses que l'Europe a traversée, tous les efforts des grande Puissances intéressées n'ont pas cessé de tendre vers la paix.

Je m'estime particulièrement heureux d'avoir pour hôte un homme d'État aussi distingué par ses services, et de réputation si haut que son nom n'est pas seulement éminent parmi ceux des hommes politiques, mais qu'il occupe une place dans cette illustre Académie, qui, depuis près de trois siècles, fait la gloire de la France et l'envie de l'Europe.

Je désire aussi vous faire part, Monsieur le Président, de ma vive appréciation de vos sentiments de respect et d'estime à l'égard de mes illustres prédécesseurs : la Reine Victoria et mon Père bien-aimé. Deux fois dans le courant de l'année ments personnels et d'apporter à la grande nation britannique le fidèle souvenir de mon pays.

Pour me faire ce soir l'interprète de l'opinion française je n'ai qu'à rappeler les éloquentes démonstrations dont j'ai été maintes fois le témoin : comme l'année dernière, sur les rives de la Méditerranée, lorsqu'en des solennités que Votre Majesté a la bonne grâce de n'avoir pas oubliée, une foule enthousiaste acclaimait la tenue martiale des équipages royaux ; ou, comme hier encore, lorsqu'à mon départ de France, la Normandie frémissante multipliait les vivats à l'adresse de l'Angleterre.

L'amitié qui unit les deux nations est aujourd'hui, chez l'une et chez l'autre, profondément enracinée dans l'âme populaire. L'histoire et le temps se sont chargés de la cultiver eux-mêmes. Elle était en germe dans l'estime traditionnelle que les siècles ont développé entre la Grande-Bretagne et la France, et qui n'a pas laissé de grandir jusque dans les dissentiments passés.

Le jour où ont été heureusement réglées les questions qui semblaient mettre en contradiction, sur plusieurs points de globe, nos intérêts respectifs, les deux peuples ont enfin cédé à leurs dispositions naturelles ; leur mutuel respect s'est peu à peu doublé d'affection et à la courtoisie de leurs relations anciennes s'est ajoutée sans peine une confiante intimité.

Au cours des graves événements qui se sont succédé depuis quelques mois, qui ont tenu l'Europe si longtemps en alerte et qui ne sont pas sans lui causer encore des préoccupations sérieuses, nos deux Gouverne-

hall I have to receive the Corps Diplomatique. At noon I set out for the City; a Guard of Honour from the King's Guard is posted in the courtyard, and a Guard of Honour of the Royal Navy and of the Honourable Artillery Company is mounted at the Guildhall, and a field-officer's escort from the 1st Life Guards is detailed for me.

At the door of the Guildhall I am received by the Lord Mayor in his ermine-bordered red robes, and the Lady Mayoress. A procession is formed, and Pichon and Cambon, having donned diplomatic uniform, do nothing to dim the riot of colour which marks the whole ceremony. All the English people look like beautiful portraits which have slipped out of their old frames, Mr. Asquith himself being vested in a uniform with gold embroideries and gold epaulettes. Last year in Russia I felt as if I had been trans-

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dernière, vous avez exprimé ces sentiments d'une manière aussi aimable qu'éloquente. Je vous assure, Monsieur le Président, qu'ils m'ont profondément ému et qu'ils resteront toujours gravés dans ma mémoire.

Je lève mon verre pour vous souhaiter, Monsieur le Président, bonheur et prospérité; pour vous assurer des vœux sincères que je forme afin que la grande nation française jouisse d'un glorieux avenir et que les relations entre nos deux pays se continuent dans une étroite intimité et avec une vitalité inaltérable.

ments ont pu apprécier, tous les jours, les bienfaits d'une entente qui leur a permis d'établir entre eux une collaboration constante, d'étudier, en plein accord, les problèmes posés et de se concerter aisément sur les solutions désirables.

Dans cet cooperation quotidienne ils n'ont pas cessé de s'employer à conjurer l'extension ou la reprise des hostilités et à prévenir, entre les Grandes Puissances, des conflits dont les conséquences seraient incalculables.

Comme l'Angleterre, la France s'est félicitée de pouvoir travailler à cette œuvre de paix avec le concours persévérant de toutes les Chancelleries et elle continuera, du même cœur, à faire effort pour que l'harmonie, dont l'Europe a donné l'exemple salutaire, ne soit pas troublée dans l'avenir.

Je lève mon verre en l'honneur de Votre Majesté, de Sa Majesté la Reine, qui m'a accueilli avec tant gracieuseté, de Sa Majesté la Reine Alexandra, de Son Altesse Royale le Prince de Galles, qu'il m'a été très agréable de revoir à Paris cette année, et de toute la Famille Royale.

Je bois à la prospérité et à la grandeur du Royaume-Uni.

ported into a semi-Asiatic circle ; now I feel as if I had been translated into a historic past, a past which France has done much to destroy for herself but which we still recognise under the fitful lights of memory. I take my seat next to the Lord Mayor at a table on which is a beautifully-wrought casket, an offering from the Goldsmiths' Company. Three loud taps with the gavel and the Recorder, in black robes and white wig, reads the Address from the City of London, the text of which, on parchment, is then rolled up and placed within the casket. How could I resist saying in my acknowledgment that it was impossible not to feel something like deep emotion when entering so august and ancient a building, the shrine of such old and glorious customs.

Fresh blasts from the trumpets, another procession is formed, and we pass to the great Banqueting Hall with its Gothic decoration, its stalls of old oak, its galleries of carved wood, its panelled ceiling, and all around it the blue and crimson standards of the various City Corporations. Thirty large tables have been laid for the guests, and on two platforms there stand like marble statues two state carvers, who will presently cut up a mammoth sirloin of beef and distribute it to the servers on large silver dishes. Before, however, the guests may eat a morsel, the Toastmaster behind me calls for silence, and in stentorian tones announces that the Chaplain will say grace. The luncheon finished, the Lord Mayor gives the toast of the King, and then that of the President of the French Republic ; this he delivers in English, but as he has been careful to hand me a translation, I am covered with confusion by the flattering words in which he alludes to me. Then it is my turn ; I am, unfortunately, obliged to speak in French, although a little later, in this same Guildhall and at the Universities of Glasgow and London, I try, rather limpingly, to address my audience in English, and on the whole am not to be too much ashamed of myself. But on this 25th June I speak to an audience so indulgent that it applauds me to the echo as if French were its native tongue ; the whole company rises to its feet and cheers enthusiastically at the words : " To-day the friendship of the two nations is if possible closer and firmer than ever ".[1]

At the dinner which I give in the evening at the French Embassy the King and the Prince of Wales wear the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour, and I put on for the first time the G.C.V.O., which the King has sent to me in the morning. The next day provides a programme scarcely less fully filled up. A travelling escort of Household Cavalry again surrounds my carriage, which conveys me to Paddington where I take train for Windsor. After an address presented by the Mayor at the station, to St. George's Chapel, where

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[1] " My Lord Mayor—This is, as you recall, the third time that the powerful city of which you are the first elected magistrate offers to a President of the French Republic one of those magnificent receptions of which your Corporation has kept the privilege. When my honourable predecessor, Émile Loubet, came among you in the month of July 1903, our two countries had not yet signed those agreements (*accords*) which were to assure between them a definite *rapprochement* ; but already they were seeking each other, and the date was near when they were about to meet and to stretch out hands to each other.

" The next year conventions were passed which freed henceforward from all misunderstanding the relations of England and France, and there is not one of my fellow-countrymen who has forgotten the happy impulse given on that decisive occasion by His Majesty King Edward VII. to the work of peace which has survived him.

" In 1908 when, in his turn, M. Fallières responded to the invitation of the City, the two peoples had already realised the efficiency of their understanding, which had stood the test of several years. A great Franco-British Exhibition, opened in London with striking éclat, presented in a concrete form the immediate benefits of this peaceful collaboration. In celebrating by one and the same manifestation both English and French genius, you made apparent to all eyes that which is permanent and fruitful in the community of our interests.

" To-day the friendship of the two nations is, if possible, closer and firmer than ever. Not a single incident arises of a nature to implicate international relations without the two friendly Governments loyally exchanging their views, and that co-operation continues which does not exclude the participation of any other Power and which tends, on the contrary, to the maintenance of the European understanding, and established between the United Kingdom and France a habit of fraternal confidence and of common will. The ideal of peace and of progress which illuminates the mind of the two peoples is nowhere more radiant than in this illustrious City, where economic life has developed with a prodigious intensity, and where on all sides the sovereign force of human labour manifests itself.

" It is with lively satisfaction, then, that I have been able to visit you, and I shall preserve an imperishable remembrance of your welcome. I raise my glass in honour of the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of the City of London."

I feel unduly hurried in my inspection of the Choir with its beautiful oak stalls and of the fine glass windows, and then having laid a wreath on the tomb of King Edward, the honours of the interior of the Castle are done me by the Governor, the Duke of Argyll, the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Household. Gladly one would have spent hours in viewing the magnificent library, where the ghost of Queen Elizabeth is still said to walk, with its marvellous collection of engravings, the St. George's Hall, the Waterloo Gallery, the superb china arranged in fine cabinets, and the many other wonders recorded in the little book which the Duke of Argyll courteously gives me; but time presses and I can only skirt Windsor forest to pay the visit to the mausoleum at Frogmore which is enjoined on all distinguished visitors.

Late in the afternoon at York House I have some talk with Sir Edward Grey. With the King I had spoken of nothing other than European generalities, but two days ago Bulgarian troops attacked the Serbian advanced post near Kratovo, and Sazonoff telegraphed to Count Benckendorff that with the prospect of a Balkan campaign it might be well for the Governments of the Triple Entente to confer as to the situation; he thought that my presence, and that of M. Pichon, in London might further any conversation. Sir Edward fulfils exactly what had always been my idea of him; a highly cultured, perfectly straightforward and eminently prudent servant of the British Crown. He understands French well, but speaks it with difficulty, and in their interviews he and Paul Cambon make a capital job of it by each using their own native tongue. Sir Arthur Nicolson, who is a good French scholar, accompanies Sir Edward Grey to take part in our talk, and when necessity arises to act as our interpreter. Deeply attached as he is to the Entente, Sir Edward is careful to say no word which might traverse the European agreements; he views things coolly and calmly and thinks, as I do, that if there is fighting in the Balkan States, the Powers must remain strictly neutral. If, however, it is a question of an arbitrage respecting the differences between Greece and Bulgaria, we both think that such arbitrage should be exercised by the six Powers, but as regards Koritza he has no hope of seeing it allotted to Greece. Short as it was, our talk left me with the very happiest impression of the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

A dinner at the Foreign Office precedes the State Ball at the Palace, when, by special favour, I am allowed to wear trousers instead of the knee-breeches and silk stockings which, in default of uniform, are " regulation ". M. Pichon resumes his diplomatic uniform, and our Ambassador—who gives his hand to the Queen in the Royal quadrille—has bravely donned his knee-breeches, which become him very well. At the end of the great ball-room is a dais with three red and gold arm-chairs for the Sovereigns and myself. The Queen takes part in several dances, the King only once or twice, as he does not like to leave me a lonely spectator of the gay scene ; I cannot indeed resist the idea that the fear of the President of the Republic being twitted in France had made him look the least little bit ridiculous in England.

The next morning I embark at Dover amid salvoes from the artillery and the British ships which have come into the roads to do honour to France ; the crowds on the beach and pier cheer lustily, and the bathers swim round our ship, which is escorted by gaily beflagged boats. My last duty before I quit the English shores is to send a telegram of sincere thanks to the King, who replies in the most cordial terms, and begs me to believe how happy a recollection he will always have of my visit to his capital.

On the 20th August there is a very pleasant echo of my visit to England in a telegram from King George congratulating me on my birthday, while on the next day a visit from M. Lahovary recalls all I went through during that dreadful Balkan crisis. As soon as he had signed the peace of Bucharest King Carol, remembering the French Government's role of peacemaker, insisted on giving me, as a mark of gratitude, the Collar of his Order of Carol I., and M. Lahovary has made the journey to Sampigny to bring me the insignia ; anyhow there is one Hohenzollern who would do justice to France in the open. I have a long talk with the Roumanian Minister as to the situation in the Near East which the Treaty of Bucharest has not as yet cleared up. Russia has deemed the giving of Cavalla to Greece as something of a set-back; the Grand Vizier has lodged another protest with the Powers as to the Enos-Midia line; Bulgaria thinks that the peace is unfair and injurious to her as well as incapable of ensuring durable peace in the Balkans; Austria thinks the revision of the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier as more important and more to be desired than the Bulgar-Greek line. Count Thurn said this to Sazonoff who replied that he held the opposite view, and as they could not agree, it was better to say nothing. Sazonoff has thereupon given up any idea of revision, which is something to be thankful for.

But it remained to wring from Turkey the evacuation of Adrianople. The Powers agreed to put pressure on the Porte not by active measures but by a refusal to give any pecuniary help. Masterly inactivity was Turkey's reply to Europe; she complained that Bulgarian troops were doing all sorts of dreadful things in the localities evacuated by the Greeks, and said that she must send a detachment of troops beyond the Maritza to protect the people there. Pichon tried to stop this, but neither his nor Sazonoff's prudence could keep Austria quiet. On the 15th August Count Thurn gave a further note to the Russian Minister reiterating that the Treaty of Bucharest both humiliated and crippled Bulgaria too much. Sofia, it was alleged, was under Serbian menace, and the hope was expressed that alike on this side and in the hinterland of Cavalla, the Treaty of Bucharest would be reconsidered. It was Austria, therefore, who was trying to rekindle the fire that had been so hardly put out and while she was wanting to tear up a Treaty in order to attenuate Serbia to the advantage of Bulgaria, the victim of her own offensive, we were trying to hold Turkey back. Contrary to the promises which the Porte had given, Turkish troops had crossed the Maritza, occupied Demotika and seemed to be about to march on Dédéagatch. Russia began to be a little excited again, and Pichon could only repeat that it was a question of respecting the decision taken by all Europe, and that the consent of all Europe was necessary before anything further could be done. The Grand Vizier, when tackled by the Ambassadors, denied any wish to occupy Dédéagatch, and said that the Turkish troops had been ordered back across the Maritza ; the Bulgarians, magnifying the Turkish advance, were noisily clamouring as to the invasion of the right bank of the river. The French Government had really shown inexhaustible patience and ingenuity in trying to bring about a *rapprochement* between Bulgaria and the Porte : Turkey was disposed to yield as to Thrace ; Bulgaria, a little chilled by Russia's remonstrances, no longer entertained any great hopes as to Adrianople and made up her mind to negotiate with Turkey direct. On the 28th August Pichon wrote to me :

> " I don't want to disturb your well-earned rest with official business, but I am closely following things and I shall thus be able very soon to submit to you a complete dossier as to Tangier. We are in entire agreement with Djavid Bey as to Syria, and you will have noted that Russia has no longer any pretext for ill-humour or recrimination—or reclamation—as regards Adrianople."

Bulgaria had, as a matter of fact, ended by sending General Savof and M. Totcheff as delegates to Constantinople, and in the first days of September there had been a respite ; negotiations began on the 9th and did not finish till three weeks later. The frontier followed a bending and very complicated line from the mouth of the river Rezvaja on the Black Sea to the southern point of the elbow formed by the Maritza towards the north and from there with new twists to the Ægean Sea, ending up in the mouth of the right branch of the Maritza ; this delimitation left Adrianople to Turkey. At the same moment there appeared another favourable sign. The Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg decided to change their Ambassadors who had not been too tactful and had rather failed to bring about the best relations between the two countries. Sazonoff nominated a M. Chebeko, who had pronounced German tastes and was known as a partisan of an agreement between the three Emperors. And at the last manœuvres in Russia our Military Mission was struck by the special attentions, evidently officially ordered, which had been shown to the Austrian officers, while M. Kokovtzoff, early in September, had spoken to the representative of the Viennese Press in flowery terms both as to Austria and the Emperor Francis Joseph. Things really seemed quiet enough for me to carry out—with mind fairly at ease—engagements I had made many weeks before.

CHAPTER IX

[PRESIDENT POINCARÉ could profit by a demonstration of popularity unparalleled in the history of France. Invited by the municipal authorities of a number of large towns in the west and south-west to pay them a visit, he had cordially acceded to their desire ; and as the army manœuvres were to take place in the neighbourhood of Toulouse, and also as he had undertaken to visit Spain in the beginning of October, his Presidential progress —in September—was found to cover almost all the region of the " langue d'oc ". The popular enthusiasm was further enhanced by the circumstance that on his arrival at Limoges he abandoned travel by railway and traversed most of the region in question in a motor-car, so that he was able to stop wherever his attention was called to a monument or a memorial connected with history or art. Almost everywhere his speeches were invested by the graceful precision of his language with a character and an originality seldom found in official utterances. The President attended the army manœuvres, during which the German military attaché, Major von Winterfeld, met with a motor accident which nearly proved fatal. The President went to visit him ; and an international contest of courtesy served to modify the unpleasant impression produced in France just at this moment by the speech of the King of Greece when entertained by the German Emperor, ascribing to the latter the honour of the victories gained by the Greek army in its war with the Turks.

In October there were two important events : the President's visit to Spain and the Radical-Socialist Congress at Pau. M. Pichon had interviews with Count Romanones, the Spanish Prime Minister, and Don Lopez Munoz, the Foreign Minister, as the result of which an Official Note was published which made a great impression. It showed that perfect agreement existed between the representatives of the two countries and affirmed the feelings of cordial understanding and friendship corresponding to the aspirations and needs of the two peoples. " These principles ", the Note said, " will find their natural application in the general policy of the two Governments as well as in the special questions connected with the work they are carrying out in Morocco". This declaration was regarded as proving that Spain proposed to place herself, in international relations, on the side of the Triple Entente, and was most cordially received in France. Judging from the enthusiasm exhibited in regard to M. Poincaré at Madrid and Carthagena, it was equally welcomed in Spain.]

Bordeaux was my last halting-place in my September tour in the west and south-west, and the day after my return to Paris, 21st September, King Constantine comes to breakfast at the Élysée, and I can quite sincerely assure him that France will remain, as always, the firm friend of the country he rules over. The King is a little embarrassed, and shows it ; he knows an unhappy impression was made here by his speech at Berlin as to the all-conquering powers of the German Army. But he dwells very pleasantly on his gratitude for the " valuable support which France has constantly given to the claims of the Greek people since they woke to independence, including the splendid successes their arms have just achieved ". He alludes to the distinguished officers who formed General Eydoux's Mission, and on the whole makes a very good speech, if one which savours rather of a Feld-Marschal on parade.

The next day, after a meeting of the Council, where it is decided that the 1910 class shall be disbanded on the 8th of November, I repair to Rambouillet for a few days (comparative) rest, which is only pleasantly interrupted by a visit from the officers of the Brazilian warship *Benjamin Constant*, who have been sent to congratulate me on my election.

At a Council which I convened there on the 4th October, the Near East was again the engrossing topic. Negotiations between Greece and Turkey were stagnant, and Germany seemed to think that Turkey might again assault her old enemy, whose chief friends were France and England ; a Turco-Greek set-to might well split up the Powers, but all we could do at the moment was to pour as much oil as possible over Constantinople and Athens equally. With these uncertainties hanging over one I start the next day for Spain, and at Irun there is handed to me a telegram of cordial welcome from the King, whom I find in full uniform—and wearing the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour—on the platform at Madrid, where the station has been lavishly decorated with shields and other devices in which the arms of Spain are entwined with the initials " R.F." On arrival at the Palace I am greeted by the Queen, as simple and gracious as ever, the Queen Mother and the Infantes and Infantas, and we take our stand on the balcony to witness the march past—under dripping, drenching rain—of the troops, the Hussars, Civil Guards and Lancers, with their silver helmets seeming to have special attraction for the crowds. General Lyautey has come to Madrid to discuss Morocco with Count Romanones and Pichon, and his advice, based on experience, is of first-rate value. Things are just now rather hung up ; England wants international organisation, Spain wants to be mistress in the town, we have our local interests to safeguard, and it is not until ten years later that a definite arrangement will be recorded. A State banquet is followed by a brilliant reception, when King Alfonso insists on introducing to me the Republican Deputy, Azcarrate, and I can say that he has the advantage of me, as French Royalists do not frequent the Élysée. Ten months later I could not have said the same thing, as by then the war had broken down all barriers, and for over four years there prevailed in France the Union Sacrée.

The next day the sun shines and the King in high spirits takes me to Toledo, entertains me to breakfast at the Alcazar, and arranges a really beautiful gala at the theatre. The morning of the 9th is devoted to visits to the French Institute, after which, and before a *déjeuner* in the Palace at Pado, I plead for a half-hour with the Velasquez, the Murillos and the Goyas, and the Director of the Museum with the Duc d'Albe do everything to make this visit enjoyable. In the afternoon I " beg off " the Corrida and substitute a garden party in the public gardens, and then have to bid farewell to the Queens before taking train for Carthagena.

Before going to our sleeping cars, and again early in the morning, the King and Romanones talked long with Pichon and myself. The misunderstandings of 1911 are completely sponged away, a new era has begun, and if we were to be attacked by Germany, we can rely on Spanish neutrality and need leave no troops for the Pyrenees. "This is a definite undertaking on my part," the King said, and he went further; if we were to be attacked, his Government might well—with the consent of the Cortes—allow our 19th Corps a passage through the Peninsula. "Anyhow," he declared, "you need have no sort of fear of a stab in the back from us." I had occasion to recall this particular conversation when replying to a passage in a pamphlet directed against Alphonso XIII. by a gifted writer, M. Ibanez; the King, who never concealed his personal feelings, thanked me in a private letter for having revealed them.

In the roads at Carthagena with the Spanish warships is a French naval division, and by special order of King George the *Invincible* has come to give us a greeting from the British Navy. The King and I go on board the British ship, where we are received with Sovereign honours, and then on board the *Diderot*. I entertain my host at breakfast when I have to give him a copy of the little farewell speech I propose to make, and I am amused to watch him following the text so as to see if I have committed it correctly to memory. To my assurance that in this Mediterranean basin, which has been the cradle of civilised races, Spain and France understand if possible their community of interests and the infinite advantage of their peaceful amity, the King replies that my words have "found their way to his heart". We then send a joint telegram to King George, thanking him for sending his good ship to Carthagena, and begging His Majesty to accept the renewed assurance of our most cordial friendship. Towards three o'clock the King, after again assuring me of his friendship and affection, bids me good-bye and the French squadron, the *Diderot* leading, weighs anchor, and amid the salvoes of Spanish guns, steams for the Mediterranean.

CHAPTER X

Although nothing of special importance had to be reported to us on our return from Spain, a minor danger now presented itself, a Serbian force having occupied strategic points which the London Conference had allotted to the new Albania; this was the more surprising, as when Pichon and I had seen M. Paschitch a few weeks earlier, we had found him particularly amenable. Sazonoff, who had been taking a cure at Vichy, was just now in Paris on his way to Berlin, and he and Pichon roundly told M. Veznitch that his Government would be much better advised to listen to the friendly remonstrance of France and Russia rather than to lay themselves open to Austrian threats. Veznitch telegraphed this at once to Belgrade, but the Austrian Government had already sent an imperious Note to Serbia, who promptly evacuated Albanian territory.

In November M. Kokovtzoff and his wife were in Paris on their way home from Italy; we found them as delightful as they were simple, and wholly guiltless of Isvolsky's would-be smartness. The Russian Prime Minister told the Czar of his conversations with Barthou and Pichon as well as with Giolitti and Hollweg; the report he drafted occurs in the Black Book, and by its straightforwardness and candour contrasts refreshingly with Isvolsky's frequent if involuntary inaccuracies.

One phrase throws some light on what Margueritte, Fabre-Luce and Judet have tried to cover up: "The statesmen from the President downwards have said again and again that they recognise the necessity of preserving at all cost concert of action in Europe and of avoiding by every means what are called isolated *démarches* in which they see a real threat against peace." The editor of the Black Book, M. René Marchand, could not have ignored what we then thought and felt ; he was at the time correspondent of the *Figaro* at St. Petersburg, a fervent admirer of Czarist Russia, and had been sent by his father to thank me for having recommended him to our Embassy. In Kokovtzoff's report there is no mention of the new demands for money which occur in the bogus letter from Isvolsky. Surely if all this had not been apocryphal, Kokovtzoff would have questioned me as to it. While it argues a great lack of critical judgment on the part of the American Professor, Mr. Barnes, to have allowed himself to have been taken in, some of the German towns seem really to have made a fine art of forgery whether of documents or of bank-notes ; could the German Imperialists find no truthful way of whitewashing their former Government ?

Kokovtzoff's report ran on in words which are cited neither by Fabre-Luce nor Margueritte nor by the Chancellor Marx in his very so-so answer to what appears over my signature in the American Review, *Foreign Affairs* :

> " The French Government have shown a quite obvious tendency to avoid anything which might lead France along an adventurous path ; in little happenings as in more important events one notices the universal desire to keep cool and do nothing which might in the slightest degree arouse complications. . . . M. Barthou and M. Pichon have said to me in so many words that the Government is most favourably inclined towards their Eastern neighbour, and have even asked me to take an opportunity of telling the Chancellor that, far from wishing to embitter relations with Germany they are ready to consider in close agreement with her how to solve the bunch of questions which arises, especially with regard to Asia Minor."

M. Kokovtzoff passed on to analyse somewhat hypothetically the French financial situation and to allude to the forthcoming Budget. If he was a little mistaken in his prognostications here, he was perfectly correct in con-concluding :

> " France will never forsake us in the large questions of general policy which bear closely on her own vital interests, but wherever those interests are not at stake, wherever other interests—Russian

or European—prevail, she will certainly show the utmost discretion and will influence us to find an elastic solution for the questions at issue."

The Russian Prime Minister had certainly no idea of France being a mere cat's-paw of his country; his main concern was as to the loan for the vast campaign of railway building absolutely essential to Russia's well-being. A loan for this could not be floated internally nor placed on the German market, which was practically closed, nor in America, who was France's debtor, nor on the London Stock Exchange, which had no particular liking for foreign emissions. M. Kokovtzoff could tell the Czar that we were ready to open the Bourse to the amount of 200,000,000 roubles on condition (1) that Russia increased her Army, and (2) that her programme should include certain lines agreed upon as necessary by the combined General Staffs in July 1912 and August 1913. The French Government were certainly within their rights both in giving financial help to an Ally, and in asking Russia to take such steps as should render her better able—if war should be—to give us prompt military support. Our object in these negotiations was to secure that Russia should throw her weight, not against Austria but against Germany, and that she should be able to mobilise the largest number of effectives in the shortest possible time. The ex-Kaiser is, therefore, putting the cart before the horse when he speaks of Russia as asking us for a system of Three Years' Service; it was France who, having taken the absolutely necessary steps to increase her forces, urged her Ally to strengthen and put in order her own military house. In imposing these conditions to our loan Barthou and Pichon showed their prudence as Kokovtzoff showed his good sense in gracefully agreeing to them.

The Near East also occupied a place in our discussions. Turkey had suddenly taken up a doubtful position at which Russia was looking askance, the Turkish plenipotentiaries not having yet been authorised to sign the peace treaty at Athens. M. Paschitch believed that Turkey, heartened by what she had achieved in the second Balkan War and encouraged by Austria, wanted to take the field again against

Greece; and he declared that if this should happen, the Serbs must stand by the side of the Greeks, as otherwise Turkey, having defeated the one, would most surely turn on the other. M. Paschitch also begged that the Triple Entente should rein Turkey in, and Sazonoff was asking England and France to help in the good work. Pichon again told Rifaat Pasha—and gave instructions to Bompard—that we would not authorise any Turkish loan in France until peace and order had been completely restored in the Near East.

But by a curious, if not a suspicious, coincidence Ferdinand of Bulgaria was in Vienna at the very moment when Turkey was meditating another attack, and both Serbia and Greece were convinced that he was the willing tool of the Austrian Government, who wished to propel Turkey into another campaign. Austria, anyhow, had, without consulting anyone, given as sharp a rap over the knuckles to Greece as she had to Serbia; Germany thought her Ally was taking too much on herself but left her to her own devices, and this time it was Rome with whom Vienna got into touch. The Austrian and Italian Ministers at Athens, without consulting the Triple Entente, told Venizelos that Greek troops must be outside Albanian territory before 31st December. Were Balkan affairs to be liquidated by a single Power or by Europe? Jules Cambon told Pichon[1] that Zimmermann complained of Austria's habit of sending ultimata without consulting Berlin; but however dissatisfied Germany was with her Ally, this would not prevent her from supporting her in the end.

Germany did, however, give a hint to Turkey to keep quiet, and the Porte, with an eye to the London and Paris markets and a little cowed by Pichon, decided to sign peace with Greece. But we were now to learn that the Turkish Government was going to vest the chief of the new German Military Mission, General Liman von Sanders, with the executive command of the Constantinople army corps. Kokovtzoff had just arrived in Berlin when Sazonoff wired him the news. He hurried to see Bethmann-Hollweg, who tried to explain that it was "merely a continuation of the old mission of Von der Goltz. Turkey's defeats have caused unfavourable comments on Germany in the European Press. We must show the world that we have not lost our authority at Constantinople." Kokovtzoff returned to the charge. Russia did not protest against the renewal of the Military Mission but against the appointment of German officers to command the corps at Constantinople. If this took place, Russia would be much perturbed. Along with other Powers she had tried to protect Constantinople and the Narrows against Greeks and Bulgars, and it was to the general interest that the Turks should hold the passage. With Germany holding military command in Constantinople, the key of the passage would be in her hands. Kokovtzoff asked either that the military command should be replaced by an "inspection" or that the *corps d'élite* under her command should be removed to Adrianople or Asia Minor, in the latter case somewhere other than on the Russian frontier or in the zone of French interests.[1] Kokovtzoff said the same thing to the Kaiser, who affected great surprise. "How could we think you would make such a fuss about such a trifle? It was the Porte who had suggested the thing to Germany, not Germany who had pressed it on the Porte."[2] The converse was the truth. What the Kaiser had in mind was to keep a military grip on Turkey, and one wonders what people would have said if the Czar had contemplated putting Constantinople under a Russian general. However, the Chancellor could only fence with Kokovtzoff,[3] and despite English, French and Russian protests, the matter was not cleared up till the next year, and then to Germany's advantage.

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[1] Yellow Book, vol. iii. No. 138. And Gauvain, *Origins of the European War*.

On the 18th November the King and Queen of Spain, who were paying a flying and informal visit to the Paris they loved so well, came to see us at the Élysée, and the next morning there was a great battue for the King at

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[1] Black Book, vol. ii. report Kokovtzoff, p. 417; Yellow Book, vol. iii. No. 135, letter, Jules Cambon.

[2] Yellow Book, vol. iii. No. 140.

[3] Yellow Book, vol. iii. No. 153.

Rambouillet; a form of sport—resulting on this occasion in a mammoth bag—for which I have never had any appetite.

A day or two later Pichon told me, under seal of secrecy, of a letter from Jules Cambon as to a conversation between the King of the Belgians and the Kaiser with his Chief of Staff, Von Moltke, at Potsdam. Cambon heard the details in confidence from the Belgian Minister in Berlin, who had insisted that our Ambassador should only inform us verbally. Cambon hesitated about writing, but he could not come to Paris, and dared not leave Pichon unwarned.[1]

King Albert was in Germany to review the regiment of which he was honorary Colonel; he expected to find the Kaiser as usual, but saw a marked change; he was evidently under politico-militarist influence, and deemed war with France inevitable. He complained, goodness knows why, that France crossed Germany at every turn, and was haunted by desire for revenge, but he was convinced of the crushing superiority of his own army and considered success as assured; General Moltke echoed his sovereign's words and declared war both necessary and inevitable. "This time, Your Majesty, it will be fought to a finish, and you cannot doubt as to the enthusiasm which will fill the German people on that day." The King protested as to France's peaceful trend, but in vain; and so impressed was he by the conversation that he at once asked Beyens to warn Cambon. "But tell him to keep it dark." Cambon said he must tell us, but that it should go no further. Baron Beyens had said that the Kaiser seemed aged and rather irritable; with the passage of years, family traditions, the strait-lacedness of the Empress, the reactionary sentiments of his entourage, perhaps a little jealousy of the Crown Prince, and, above all, the hardly restrained impatience of the military party, affected him more and more. Baron Beyens was sure of one thing, that I ought to be informed as to all this, and he also wished me to know that King Albert thought Germany as favourably disposed towards Russia and England as she was ill disposed to France. Cambon had taken Baron Beyens' words much to heart. There was no question of the Belgian

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[1] Yellow Book, August 1913.

King being a mouthpiece of the Kaiser, who might, however, want to drill into him that Belgian resistance would be unavailing should Germany violate Belgian neutrality. Cambon wound up his covering letter by reminding us that the Kaiser was not remarkable for self-control, and that we must keep our powder dry. Baron Beyens has since expressed his opinion[1] that the Kaiser's confidences to King Albert were made with the view of inducing Belgium to throw herself into the strong arms which were held open first to embrace and then to strangle her.

Von Sanders' appointment was one of the signs of German progressive militarism, the Saverne incident[2] was another, and Pan-Germanism was now becoming so dominant that Professor Hans Delbrück, in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, was moved to say that Germany might plunge into a war which would be as disastrous to humanity as to herself. He added that it was Pan-Germanism which had thrown England into the arms of France, but for which Germany could have done much better for herself at the time of Agadir and could have secured a much larger slice of Congo territory. The advice of the distinguished Professor fell on deaf ears, as the Pan-Germanists continued to chant the same refrain :

> " In the person of the youngest of Lieutenants ", wrote the *Post* (referring to Zabern), " the German people is insulted ; nothing but a Prussian solution of the question is admissible. We are far from defending Lieutenant von Forstner for using the term 'wackes' . . . but this incident, insignificant in itself, has opened our eyes to the question of Alsace-Lorraine. . . . Was it a wise thing to give a constitution to this country ? Was it ripe for this ? We want men in Alsace, male Prussians. . . ." (8th December.)

Das Vaterland reproached bitterly the members of the Reichstag who had been bold enough to criticise the conduct of certain military officers, and asked for a rigorous application of the old Bismarck programme, while in the *Tag* Major-General Heim said that it was not Alsatians but Germans who should be the real masters in Alsace. The Chancellor was more guarded in tone than Falkenhayn, but he hesitated to attach any blame to the military; he shilly-shallied, said that he entirely endorsed his military colleague, and made a speech which pleased nobody. A motion to the effect that his reply was not according to the views of the Reichstag was voted by a large majority. But this really meant nothing at all. Parliamentary authority counted for very little in Germany, and the Chancellor was not really responsible either to Parliament or to his country, but only to his Imperial master. A whiff of independence by the Reichstag could not remove the uneasiness caused to us by King Albert's revelations as to the mind of Wilhelm II.

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[1] *Germany Before the War.*

[2] Commonly known as the Zabern incident—A young lieutenant, sprung from the minor nobility, said in an address to the recruits of Zabern that if they stabbed a " Wackes "—a local expression for a native of Alsace—who insulted them, they would not be punished but given a present of M. 10. This led to considerable commotion, and among other things the wounding by the same officer of a lame cobbler who was quite erroneously said to have insulted him.

CHAPTER XI

[Parliament reassembled on 4th November, and ten days later the Budget Commission was appointed. The Budget was predestined to delay, and the battlefield chosen by the Opposition was the question of the loan. On the 1st December M. Barthou declared that the Cabinet would stand or fall by the figure of 1,300,000,000 francs and a 3 per cent interest, and secured a majority of 21. The next question as to whether Rentes should be exempt from taxation was taken the day following; an amendment by M. Delpierre was accepted by M. Barthou and made a question of confidence. M. Noulens made a vehement personal appeal to him and a great uproar ensued, and eventually this amendment was lost by 290 votes to 265; M. Barthou at once resigned, and the Radical Party took advantage of the success. M. Poincaré, after consulting the Presidents of the two Chambers and other important politicians, invited first M. Ribot and then M. Dupuy to form a Conciliation Ministry, but as the Radical-Socialists would not join it, the President of the Republic had to apply to their leader. On 2nd December M. Gaston Doumergue had formed his Cabinet, with himself as Foreign Minister, M. Caillaux being Minister for Finance, N. Noulens and M. Monis having charge of the army and navy. The Ministerial declaration read on the 11th stated that the new Government would faithfully carry out the law enacting Three Years' Military Service.]

In the new ministry M. Doumergue was no less active as head of the Government than he was circumspect as Foreign Minister; he mated straightforwardness with keen observation, and sagacity with the most winning manners. He had quickly got to know the different Ambassadors and to earn their esteem. Isvolsky of course told Sazonoff of his first interviews with Doumergue, and if one strips his report of its wonted verbiage, one sees that the President of the Council only said to the Ambassador what he had said in Parliament. " Doumergue tells me that the new Cabinet will keep closest touch with Russia, and his speech in the Chamber clearly sets out the unswerving external policy of France, based on her alliance with Russia and her Entente Cordiale with England."

The Barthou Cabinet had told Isvolsky that the Russian loan for their railways could only be floated after one of our own, and of this Kokovtzoff and the Czar himself were well aware. Caillaux, on the contrary, proceeded to tell Parliament that he would postpone the internal loan, thus giving a better market for a foreign flotation, and Isvolsky of course begged Doumergue for an immediate issue. According to Isvolsky also, Caillaux told the Russian Financial Agent that he was ready in the immediate future to issue shares to the amount of 500,000,000 francs for the Russian railways, and that our own loan would be effected, if at all, after the elections, and would only amount to 400,000,000 francs. The same occurred as regards the Serbian loan; it looked as if Isvolsky had won all along the line and had Caillaux in tow, whereas the Finance Minister probably thought that the Russian railways, which were of important strategic value, should be constructed with the least possible delay, and that anyhow it was to the interest of France to do what she rightly could do to give satisfaction to her Ally. Doumergue, however, kept a very sharp eye on Russian ulterior plans. " He is specially anxious ", Isvolsky reported, " as to our putting forward any claims for compensation which he thinks might lead to some cutting up of Asiatic Turkey and thence to a European war." At the end of December Paul and Jules Cambon were both in Paris, and after a long conference with them on the Near East, Doumergue wrote to Isvolsky—precisely on the same lines as I had done—begging to be closely informed as to what were Russia's ideas with regard to the proposed intervention and what her own proposals to England and France would be if concerted action at Berlin and Constantinople failed to fructify. " Doumergue ", Isvolsky must say, " insists on the necessity of preliminary discussions between Petersburg, Paris and London with respect to every possible eventuality as also what we might think well to do if intervention at Berlin and Constantinople should fail."

Thus Gaston Doumergue does precisely—and rightly—what Fabre-Luce, Margueritte and Judet accuse me of having done. He wants to come to agreement with Russia and England even before arriving at any European agreement so that Russia may not make any move by herself, and he insists on knowing what Russia is up to so that he may supervise, and, if necessary, check her actions.

Just now one could not help wishing that, with regard to such matters as national defence and external politics there could be the same unanimity which marked the Government of 1912, and sometimes one was even tempted to do France the injustice to ask oneself whether, even in the face of some sudden national danger, complete national concord would assert itself. The happenings of 1913 were certainly not such as to free one of anxiety for the future. The incidents at Nancy and Lunéville, what the King of the Belgians told us in confidence, Jules Cambon's reports as to the Kaiser's "goings on", the orations of General Falkenhayn and Hollweg with respect to the outrages at Zabern, and many other things, went to show that Prussianism and Pan-Germanism waxed daily stronger; and exercised more and more influence over the Imperial Government, and that any day we might find ourselves up against a Germany as hostile as she was bent on war. There was, of course, a small section of Frenchmen who believed that under certain, but rather unthinkable, conditions it would be possible to bring about a stable peace, and who even hugged themselves with the idea that Germany, in return for our renouncing all claim to Alsace and Lorraine, would grant entire autonomy to the provinces she had incorporated in her Empire; an idea which did not square with Hollweg's speech in the Reichstag or with the menacing tones of the Kaiser at Strasbourg, or with what our Ambassador had to tell us, or with the well-meant, if abortive, mission of Sir Thomas Barclay, sometime President of the British Chamber of Commerce, in Paris. That admirable Englishman, in his desire to see Germany and France better friends, told me at the end of 1912 that he was going to Berlin to talk to Hollweg, whom he knew well, and he asked me whether I thought France would give something—say in Asia—in return for the restitution of Lorraine. I could not encourage his hopes, but as Sir Thomas was going on his own responsibility, I could only express my thanks to him for his goodwill and wish him well. I heard no more from Sir Thomas for over three years, when he told me that Hollweg had turned down his suggestion altogether. " It will be quite impossible for us ", the Chancellor had bluntly said, " to give up Lorraine ; we annexed her as a measure of security against a French invasion. She has been fortified at great expense, and the Reichstag only voted the money as a matter of national defence. How could we possibly throw over all that we have done during the last forty years ? Besides, any compensation given by France in Asia would rouse suspicion in England, where there is already much annoyance about our increased Navy."

The question was whether Germany, where militarism was king, had decided at least to forbid Austria to rattle a German sabre for her own advantage. Jules Cambon believed that Germany might grumble, but had now accustomed herself to let her Ally go as she pleased. She knew Austria to be threatened with dismemberment, financially strained by military expenses, undermined by the distress of nationalities, incapable of any reorganisation on liberal lines and aiming at an increased Magyar-German domination which could only prove a very rickety basis. In the Triple Alliance Austria had become a parasitic growth, but as it was the Hapsburg Empire which could alone open the gates to Teuton enterprise in the East, Germany could not and would not break off with her Ally and scarcely dared to curb her from bolting. Yet Austria's behaviour, whether to Serbia, Greece or Montenegro, in 1913 showed how irritable and impulsive she had become, and how likely she was to be propelled by interior trouble into a dangerous excursion from which there might be no retreat.

I often remembered a visit I once paid to Spalato and Salone, when many of the well-known inhabitants told me how eager they were to shake off the Austrian yoke. Monseigneur

Bulic, the Curator of Records and of the Museum, attached to me a professor who spoke of "wearing the uniform of servitude", and the Monseigneur himself indulged in melancholy reflections on the intolerable subjugation of the Slavs.

Mgr. Bulic came to Paris in 1919 to further the claims of Yugo-Slavia; I could have reminded him of his dictum of years earlier and which I knew to be true: "Austria-Hungary, as she now stands, is staked against the will of the people, against human liberty, against justice and goodwill. Whether Europe likes it or not, a State so shockingly organised is doomed to early demise."

Every time that Austria made a new blunder in 1913, there came back to me Monseigneur Bulic's significant words. France, however, was concerned to prop up for as long as possible this old house of cards, and for fear of oversetting her, we could never approach her except on tiptoe, and scarcely daring to breathe.

SECOND PART

CHAPTER XII

If Montaigne says truly that a crop of little troubles is worse than any single one however great, then I have seldom been " worse off " than in the first six months of 1914, a drab period when the growing anxiety as to the future of Europe was aggravated by the petty troubles inherent in my office. France seemed to be torn by political frays just when at any moment entire unity of national purpose might be vitally necessary ; I had to watch ugly parliamentary intrigues and odious financial scandals, to bear my part in the unforeseen reconstruction of one Cabinet, in the resignation of another, and in the abrupt collapse of a third, while I must pay the price of constitutional limitations when enduring the contradictory complaints of opponent parties, each of whom wanted to use my authority for their particular benefit.

The New Year Day's ceremonies passed off as usual ; Sir Francis Bertie, the doyen of the Ambassadors, pink and plump in his full uniform, voiced the hopes of his colleagues that the peace which had been re-established would be maintained. " France ", I could fairly say to the Ambassador, " has worked untiringly in harmony with the other Powers, first to try and prevent, then to limit, and finally to put a term to recent hostilities. So much courage has been shown and so much blood has been shed, we can only hope that nothing will now come to spoil peace, and that, with no further carking cares, the various nations will do all and everything for the general good and for the advancement of civilisation, as well as in their own interests."

In the course of some rather desultory talk that afternoon the President of the Council suggested that I should do as my predecessors in office had done, and pay a visit to St. Petersburg, and this—he urged—the sooner the better, as I had already been the guest of the King of England. The newspapers had indeed by this time aired M. Doumergue's advice, and had even been good enough to name a date for my journey to Russia; of course nothing could be decided without consulting the pleasure of the Russian Government. Any reader of my earlier volume will have seen that since the institution of the Franco-Russian alliance, no French Government, of whatever colour, had conceived any idea of loosening, let alone renouncing, the bond between us. As a matter of fact, the two great European groups which existed before 1914 had for a considerable time succeeded in keeping the peace in the teeth of constant threats just because they balanced one another nicely and because from the fact that, roughly speaking, they were of equal strength, they had a wholesome fear of coming to blows with one another. No better organisation than this could be imagined, and men were quick to say that for the safety of France and the peace of Europe the alliance with Russia and the entente with England were far preferable to any sort of splendid isolation.

At the première of *Parsifal* on the 4th January, I received the Italian, Austrian and Russian Ambassadors in my box, and M. Isvolsky, never loth to put himself forward, was quite ready to discuss the proposal to which premature publicity had been given. After Isvolsky had been to see me the next day the wires became busy between Paris and St. Petersburg; it was intimated that the health of the Empress and the Czarevitch necessitated the Court being in the Crimea during the spring, and eventually, on the 20th January, the Emperor's invitation was fixed for the end of July, which looked likely to be a time of holiday, fine weather and political calm. Two days later came a telegram from Paul Cambon; the King of England would like to pay a return visit. Domestic politics were likely to forbid His Majesty's absence in the summer; the autumn was too far off and might not be a propitious moment; would it suit me for the King to arrive in France on or about the 20th April? Although this date clashed with our elections I closed with it at once, and thus there was a prospect of two series of fêtes to which, with our firm belief in European peace, we could look forward with pleasure. Then came a message from our Minister in Sweden. Would I, on my way to or from Russia, pay a visit to Scandinavia as M. Fallières had done in 1908? And if I were to land at Copenhagen, surely I would go to Stockholm? M. Thiebault was emphatic as to the value of an official visit to the Swedish Court. The people, fed by German propaganda, had been worked up against Russia: vast military preparations were in the air, and Russia was taking certain precautions in Finland which Sweden interpreted as threats. Also the Cabinet in Stockholm was pretty sure that on several occasions the Russian Government had encouraged espionage in Sweden, and M. Thiebault thought it highly desirable to put an end to these *malentendus*, and that I could very usefully bring a friendly message from St. Petersburg to Stockholm. It was finally decided, after M. Doumergue had felt the Russian pulse, that on my way back to France I should visit the three Scandinavian capitals.

Then arose a still larger question. President Wilson was a member of the American Academy, which was to meet ceremonially. Would it be possible for me, a member of the French Academy, to attend this great function, thus securing a meeting between the two Presidents in their capacity of Academicians? The suggestion was attractive, but considerations of time and space compelled me to send my excuses to Mr. Butler, the President of the University of Columbia, from whom the graceful invitation had emanated.

Meanwhile M. Doumergue was busy in trying to purge international relations of the germs which they were harbouring. First there was the irritating question of the military command in Constantinople, a question which it was difficult to broach, however delicately, in Berlin.

Herr Jagow had intimated confidentially both to the British and French Ambassadors that if the matter took on a European colour, it might be impossible of adjustment.

Sazonoff, impatient as he was to solve the question, would not make trouble in Germany; he thought of bringing pressure to bear on Turkey, murmured rather vaguely about some sort of compensation, and, while marking time, he asked for a financial boycott of the Porte. In September, Mehmed Djavid Bey had signed an agreement with our Foreign Minister which rather tied our hands, as we had promised, if the money market were favourable, to favour a Turkish loan, and also generally to help Turkey to adjust her finances. In return Turkey would give facilities for our educational and philanthropic establishments there, as well as concessions respecting ports and railways in Asia Minor. Russia, England and Germany had done much the same thing, and, while Doumergue and Caillaux wanted to fix the thing up as quickly as possible, Russia was so upset by the question of the " command " that she was willing to sacrifice any advantage to be derived from the Porte if France and England would do the same and continue to exercise joint and energetic pressure. On the 10th of January, Doumergue told Sir Francis Bertie—and telegraphed to Paul Cambon—that the mere refusal or postponement of a Turkish loan would not have any decisive effect, as Turkey could easily get money elsewhere for immediate requirements and could then await a favourable moment to do a big financial deal. Of course, the resistance to Russian demands came not from Constantinople but from Berlin; Turkey was only an instrument in German hands, and Sazonoff's tactics were doomed to failure. The Kaiser declared that he had told both King George and the Czar about the military mission to Turkey when they were staying with him, and that neither had voiced any objection. The Czar had no recollection whatever of anything of the sort, and King George let the Russian Government know (1) that the Kaiser had made no allusion to any powers to be vested in the commander of the military mission; (2) that he had only alluded to it *en passant* and as a continuation of the Von der Goltz mission; certainly the King had never understood that the mission would assume any other character. Eventually, after Grey and Cambon had spoken to Lichnowsky and to Jagow, the Kaiser made some purely formal concessions in order really to retain things as they stood; he let go the shadow and stuck to the substance. On the 14th January, Delcassé wrote to Doumergue that, according to the German Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, the Sanders question would be settled before the end of the month by making Sanders Inspector-General of the Turkish Army—much as Von der Goltz had been—without any active command. Count Pourtalès, German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, had told Sazonoff that he considered the question as settled, but did not say that he was speaking in the name of his Government and was a little vague. Two days later Delcassé could say Jagow had told the Russian Ambassador that Sanders, who had just been made a General of Cavalry in the German Army, was about to be appointed a Marshal in the Ottoman Army, and he had naïvely added, "As the rank of Marshal is incompatible with the command of an Army Corps, the difficulty between us is now settled." This bit of sharp practice was confirmed by our Chargé d'Affaires in Constantinople, who said that the Russian Ambassador was satisfied and considered the incident closed.

> "General Liman, whom I met this evening, told me that he had received yesterday a telegram from the Emperor William informing him of his promotion to the rank of General of Cavalry. He added that, agreeably with this promotion, the Sultan had, by an *Iradé*, nominated him a Marshal. The command of the 1st Army Corps is therefore given to a Turkish General Officer. The Russian Ambassador seems very satisfied with this solution which in his opinion definitely closes the incident."

So ran the telegram, and the Ambassador and his Government must have been easily pleased, for the new Marshal was certainly not going to stay in Constantinople to pay court to the houris or to smoke a nargileh. Germany gave the bone to Russia and retained the marrow, but anyhow the Triple Entente once more showed evidence of their desire to ease matters.

At the same moment France was showing the utmost patience at Berlin with regard to the railways in Asia Minor and the Baghdad line. These delicate negotiations—inspired by our wish to brush away any trace of dissension between Germany and ourselves—had begun at Berlin before the fall of the Barthou Ministry, and the Deputy Governor of the Bank of France, M. Sergent, and our Consul had conferred with the diplomatic officials and the Directors of the Deutsche Bank.[1] M. Sergent had pointed out that France and Germany were mutually concerned with the finances of Turkey, who was their debtor, as also with the general adjustment which the Balkan peace might dictate. The Germans at once declared for restoring the Baghdad railway enterprise to where it was, with all its privileges, before the Balkan campaign, and claimed the Aleppo-Meskéné as well as the Alexandretta line ; their spokesman sourly saying that if France raised any objection, Germany might well obstruct our intellectual and moral expansion in Syria and elsewhere. Jules Cambon had to intervene personally with Zimmerman, but in vain, and the negotiations were suspended for some weeks. On the 22nd January Doumergue telegraphed to Jules Cambon:

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[1] One of these, Herr von Gwinner, who now poses as having been a pre-war preacher of peace, was one of the most difficult to deal with, and every time he took part in the proceedings alluded rather rudely, not only to Germany's actual interests in Asia Minor but to pretensions, the success of which would some day assure the supremacy of the German Empire in the East. No doubt he had already in his mind's eye the mammoth maps which at the beginning of the war were hung up in German railway stations and which, from Antwerp to Baghdad, marked with a long blue line the coming German conquests. The beginning of the war seems to have given Herr von Gwinner a little stab of conscience. Mr. Gerard, who in 1914 was the United States Ambassador in Berlin, published in the *Current History* of March 1926 an article in which, absolving France from all responsibility for the clash of arms, he mentioned this curious detail as affecting Germany : " Herr von Gwinner, director of the Deutsche Bank, told me a few days after the outbreak that the General Staff officers had gone to the Kaiser and told him that they would break their swords across their knees if he did not sign the declaration of war ". Admiral Tirpitz has also declared, in the book which he published in 1926, that Herr von Gwinner told Admiral von Capelle in 1913 that a number of highly influential Germans had wanted the war and worked for it. This agreement of witness was so keenly felt by M. Theodore Wolff that in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24th October 1926, he exclaimed that " Admiral von Tirpitz had stabbed in the back the men who were devoting their time to refute the culpability theory contained in the Treaty of Versailles ". These revelations upset Herr von Gwinner very much, and to shelter himself from the attacks which his admissions of 1913 had drawn on him from the " innocentists ", he thought well in reply to the Ambassador and the Admiral to string together the silliest calumnies against France in general and against the President of the Republic in particular; not only did he write an article, basing himself on such authorities as Judet and Margueritte—whose allegations I have abundantly disproved—but in order to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of German Nationalists, he gravely stated that the French Government had tried to get M. Caillaux assassinated in order to hide the real truth as to the " origins of war ".

> "Sergent and Ponsot will arrive in Berlin on Sunday to resume *pourparlers* according to the express wishes of Germany. Before we make any further concessions I think we should have a detailed answer in writing as to the remarks and counter proposals which you have made and which so far have only been simply acknowledged. The proposals which formed the base of our undertaking of the 14th January contained some very important concessions, beyond which we should not care to go without obtaining some corresponding conciliatory effort from Germany."

A day or two after *pourparlers* had started again—on the Kaiser's birthday—our Ambassador had a very serious talk with Hollweg during the dinner at the Chancery. "Are not our relations rather more difficult than they were a month ago?" the Chancellor asked point-blank. The Ambassador replied that he had not noticed it; but he reminded the Chancellor of German remarks arising from the presence of Djavid Bey in Paris. "You know that the French Government desires peace in the Near East just as much as you do; we have considerable interests in Turkey, and it is only natural that the Porte, if she is hard up, should address herself to the Paris markets, and we cannot recognise the necessity of consulting you first before assisting her." The Chancellor did not press this point, but during the evening resumed the conversation.

> "It is probably", Cambon wrote to us, "the reopening of the negotiations about Asia Minor which induced Hollweg to ask me if things were not worse than they were a month ago; Sergent thinks that the telegram containing your instructions was deciphered here and made some impression on Hollweg. Anyhow, he is very keen that we should wind up the matter as quickly as possible, and I have told him that I want this as much as he does, but that there must be reciprocity as it is a matter of our agreement being accepted by public opinion in France."

Hollweg replied that he also had to be careful, as he was criticised on all sides, that France for the last forty years had been pursuing a policy of enlargement, that she had obtained an immense amount of territory, and that Germany now wanted her place in the sun. " Three years ago we allowed you to constitute an empire in North Africa ; what have we received in exchange ? Only compensations which it is very difficult to appreciate, and now that we are furthering in Asia Minor—as we have done for years—a great plan and à great work. . . ." In reply to this, Jules Cambon could retort that whereas Germany was securing almost a whole region, she was haggling with France over a few kilometres of railway in Syria. The Chancellor repeated that Germany wanted elbow-room and that if she were restricted in Asia she must find outlet elsewhere. " Let us stick to facts and discard our differences, otherwise it will be dangerous." Our Ambassador wound up his despatch to Doumergue by saying that this conversation had reminded him of one which he had with the Chancellor about Morocco at the beginning of 1911 ; he thought it deserved our closest attention, and he wondered whether a new Agadir was going to arise in the Eastern Mediterranean. A week afterwards the Kaiser himself intervened : " Settle the matter among yourselves, and settle it at once," he said to the French delegates in peremptory tones ; and a settlement ensued which, if it justified our desire for peace, limited our economic and moral influence in Asiatic Turkey to the narrowest zone.

True to his spirit of moderation, M. Doumergue, agreeably here with German views, would not fix up any agreement with the Porte without making sure that the Turk was not going to embark on some new adventure. Our Chargé d'Affaires telegraphed from Pera on the 9th January that the situation had changed since England had come to terms with France about the islands ; that the Great Powers had allowed the Comité to retake Adrianople ; that the Young Turk Government had consolidated itself and had made with Bulgaria, if not an alliance, anyhow secret arrangements which frightened Greece, and had acquired large influence on the Moslem world by the purchase of the Brazilian Dreadnought and by the presence of Enver Pasha at the Ministry of War. The men who had stood up to all Europe in respect of the Enos-Midia line were flushed with their success, and could any day, without actually declaring war, land Ottoman troops in the islands.

However, on the 14th January, M. Venizelos came to see me. He was on his way from Rome to London and was fairly cheerful. He complained that the Italian Government had only admitted a third of the Greek claims in Epirus, and only that amount if Austria agreed, and he was a little fretful about the Triple Alliance, which, inspired by Turkey, kept on putting off the answer that had been promised to England as to the tiresome question of the islands. "As for ourselves," he said, very positively, "we stick to Chios and Mitylene, the two largest and richest, which could not be compensated for by any which Italy holds, not even Rhodes. I have little fear as to a Turkish attack, as, if Bulgaria should waive her neutrality so as to give Turkish troops a passage across her territory, Roumania would step in. Roumania and Greece are bound by the convention which guarantees the carrying out of the treaty of Bucharest, and although Roumania has so far declined an actual alliance, she may alter her mind and Greece and Roumania allied would surely become the Allies of France." And, perhaps anticipating my thoughts, he hurried on that I must not judge King Constantine by his unhappy speech at Potsdam; the King, he assured me, had been rather caught on the occasion by the Kaiser, and he was neither Francophobe nor Germanophile, but purely Greek for the Greeks. I very politely assured Venizelos that France had no ill feeling as to what his King had said at Potsdam and we had only a happy recollection of his visit to Paris. A few days later Venizelos came to breakfast at the Élysée with Doumergue, and again begged me to try to get a ruling about the islands and to let Turkey know with the least possible delay what the European decision was. He urged also that a Greek loan should be floated on the Bourse; the same request being on the lips of the victorious Balkan States and of vanquished Turkey.

France might perhaps be flattered at being regarded as the universal banker, and this doubtless would lend weight to our diplomacy. But at the beginning of 1914 Parliament viewed with some apprehension a stream of foreign loans to take precedence of an internal loan, part of which was required for purposes of national defence. Russia, who was also on the borrow, disliked our putting out a Turkish loan, and on the 23rd of January Delcassé telegraphed to Doumergue :

> " The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople telegraphs that the German Government, anticipating the proceeds of the Turkish loan, offers to sell to the Porte the battle cruisers *Moltke* and *Goeben* ; these were launched in 1910, 1911, and are of 23,000 tons displacement, but they would not be able to stand up against ships of the same year and displacement which have heavier guns and better protection. . . . With the proceeds of the sale Germany would equip herself with two ships capable of dealing with any unit, however formidable, which any country can produce. I have told you how anxious the Russian Government is about Turkey's wish to get hold at once of some warships, and one knows how pugnacious Turkey is with regard to Greece. Also the French and Russian Embassies of Constantinople have combined to denounce any facilities for Turkish troops to cross Bulgaria in a march on Greece ; as we are quite as anxious for peace as Russia is, ought we not to prevent Turkey getting from us the means of disturbing it, and as we are the Allies of Russia, ought we not to keep in mind the possibility of the Porte turning her Dreadnoughts on Russia before Russian battleships now under construction are out of dock ? "

So Germany, with all her assumed dread of Turkey taking the field again, was willing to equip her both on land and sea, to allow one of her generals to look after Turkish troops on the Narrows, and to give two ships which, if not up to German standard, would cut a very creditable figure for the Porte. Surely the future coalition of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey had already been sketched out, and the Kaiser, whatever he may have said to the King of the Belgians in 1913, had taken steps to close Russia's road to the Mediterranean in the event of war, and to cut communications between her and France.

CHAPTER XIII

[On 9th February the Chamber reached the discussion on the Budget of 1914 when by 440 votes to 67 the General Debate was omitted in the hope of gaining time: the Debate was resumed on the 20th and the Government did not ask for a vote of confidence. On 4th March M. Caillaux, invited by the Senate Committee on the Income Tax Bill to appear before it, declared that he agreed with it in favouring the French Rentes as to taxation; the 3 per cent Rentes immediately went up. But the next day the Finance Minister stated that he had merely reserved this question, that he was resolved to put a tax on Rentes as on every other kind of income. A fall in Rentes followed, and rumours of an unfavourable character were circulated, though no one could prove that successive interpolations on M. Caillaux's financial policy had facilitated speculation on the Bourse. There was, however, a marked revival of the Press campaign against M. Caillaux, still led by the *Figaro*, the editor, M. Calmette, producing documentary evidence of various alleged malpractices which the Minister declared was not authentic. It was whispered that the Public Prosecutor in the Paris Court of Appeal had been requested by M. Monis, then Prime Minister, to grant M. Rochette, a company promoter, a very useful delay in a prosecution for fraud instituted against him. In the sitting of 13th March, M. Delahaye, a member of the Right, introduced a motion inviting M. Caillaux to take legal proceedings against the accuser. The motion was opposed by MM. Doumergue and Jaurès, who regarded it as merely a political manœuvre, but three days later Madame Caillaux called at the office of the *Figaro* and shot M. Calmette dead with a revolver. That evening M. Caillaux offered his resignation, which M. Doumergue, after a hesitating resistance, was obliged to accept.]

While M. Doumergue's attentions were largely drawn to external matters he was, no less than myself, continuously troubled with matters of domestic policy which recur vividly to me when I cast my eye over the copious notes which I drew up in the precious moments when I was left alone. On the 7th January Doumergue tells me that Delcassé does not accept a renewal of his Embassy at St. Petersburg. He does not give any reasons, and certainly there have been no " differences " between our Ambassador and the country to which for a year he has been accredited. Doumergue proposes to replace him by M. Paléologue, who is now " Director of Politics " at the Quai d'Orsay and therefore in the running for an Embassy; he fears that Paléologue would much prefer the blue skies of Italy to the bitter cold of the Neva, but Rome is not vacant, and when it is, Léon Bourgeois and Stephen Pichon would have to be considered. Truth to tell, Paléologue, when the proposal is made to him, is not enthusiastic ; he thinks that in St. Petersburg he will pine for the Mediterranean, but he yields gracefully to the wishes which both Doumergue and I express.

8th January.—The *Figaro* publishes this morning over the signature of Gaston Calmette a sensational article in which M. Caillaux is accused of having procured electoral funds for himself by methods the reverse of becoming. This personal attack is not according to the usual style of the newspaper, or of M. Calmette, who has hitherto been the most courteous of journalists. I have known him for many years, and recognised his charm as well as his perfect correctitude. Since the formation of a Radical Ministry, which he did not favour, he has been tactful enough not to come any more to the Élysée. I do not know what influence has been brought to bear on him, but I am very much surprised at his new departure and I know nothing of the facts which he alleges. I have merely heard that if the Minister of Finance favoured at a particular moment the flotation of foreign loans, it was because they tended to procure electoral funds. But the *Figaro* suggests much uglier things, which no one, however malevolent, has ever suggested to me. At the Ministerial Council to-day Caillaux is very hot against Calmette and feverishly drafts a *démenti* for the Press. He gives me the impression of being a slandered innocent.

10th January.—Delcassé telegraphs that M. Kokovtzoff wants to make some alteration as to the arrangement for the Railway Loan, and Doumergue and Caillaux agree to this.

14th January.—M. Caillaux tells me that he hears that the *Figaro* is about to publish the deciphered German telegrams of 1911 in which M. de Lancken tells Berlin of the conversations which he has had with M. Fondère, and that this may bring about very awkward international complications; he says that if the telegrams are published the Government, to avoid any responsibility, will be obliged to declare the papers to be forgeries and to prosecute the newspaper. I tell him that the disclosures of the decipherments would be regrettable and perhaps risky, but that it would be difficult to bring Calmette to the Élysée, as if he were to go on with his campaign some people might say that I had inspired it.

16th January.—Barthou tells me that Calmette promises to make no sort of allusion to the mysterious " verts " and assures him that M. Briand has had nothing whatever to do with the *Figaro* articles.

20th January.—Contrary to the practice of my predecessors, I dine this evening at the German Embassy. Up till now the Ambassadors have been invited to the Élysée but the President of the Republic has not gone to the Embassies so as not to tread—according to the fiction of ex-territoriality—on foreign, and especially on German, soil. I see no reason for keeping up a custom which has all the appearance of " sulks ", so I have promised Baron von Schoen to spend the evening in his beautiful house in the Rue de Lille, which the King of Prussia so cleverly bought in 1815, and which is still full of recollections of Eugène Beauharnais and the Queen Hortense, and which modern Germany has exorcised with the huge portrait of the Kaiser. The Ambassador is kindness and affability itself, and introduces to me Herr Wangenheim, the German Ambassador to Constantinople, who is on his way through Paris. His conversation is clever, he is positive in opinion and rather dictatorial in tone, and is convinced that the Turks will never allow

Greece to have Chios and Mitylene and that they will not even bow to an official notice of all the European Powers. Herr Wangenheim affects to be rather anxious as to Russia's policy in Armenian affairs, and he also fears that the Government of St. Petersburg will find therein an excuse for interference in Asia Minor and for opening out for herself the road to Constantinople. He would like that European inspectors should for the next twelve or eighteen months be deputed to draw up a plan of reform in Armenia and that these reforms should not be definitely decided upon until this inquiry be concluded. " To-day ", he says, " we are working on rather vague data."

Except for this little talk I only exchange generalities with my host himself and with his guests, but my being at the German Embassy—where I stay late—is announced in the Press and has a political significance as denoting that France has no *arrière pensée* in her manner of envisaging peace.

25*th January*.—A telegram comes from Cambon to Doumergue to which was appended a *compte rendu* of a curious conversation between Admiral Tirpitz and Madame de Faramond, the wife of our naval attaché at Berlin, which ran something thus :

> " Why do you continue to ' bouder ' us ? The harm we did you 43 years ago is nothing compared to the humiliations you inflicted on us for 150 years. Why should not France and Germany shake hands ? Alsace-Lorraine may be the crux, but it is just as disagreeable for us to hold it as for you to lose it, and it is purely a question of military defence. If France would give up her policy, based after all on sentiment, regarding Alsace-Lorraine, it would effect an immediate *rapprochement* between us ; the provinces themselves would be more comfortable, and we should be prepared to make you suitable concessions ; you would do what you pleased, for instance, in North Africa and in Morocco. If France, instead of putting her hand into the hand of England —who does not even begin to be sincere—would forget the past and join up with us, the peace of Europe and a glorious future for our two countries would be equally assured. England is the most selfish nation in the world ; she thinks only of herself and never sticks to her engagements with either friend or ally. At the critical moment she will let you go and let you in.

England's unbridled ambition will one day land you and land us in a mess from which she will try to extract every advantage. Madame de Faramond then mildly asked where the imminent danger was and who was thinking of war. Not ourselves, was Tirpitz's answer, we shall never make war on you although our army has never been so powerful as it is to-day; it is England who will provoke you to attack us so that you may pull the chestnuts out of the fire for her."

So Tirpitz's kind idea was that we should break with England, leave the dominion of the seas to Germany, forget the past, wipe out all our souvenirs and exploit Morocco, in return for which he promises us peace, although in the same breath the Admiral reminds us of Germany's armed strength. While Tirpitz was talking in this strain about England, and urging us to break off with her, Germany was apparently intriguing in the Balkans and M. Dumaine was telegraphing from Vienna (24th January) that the German Government was definitely opposed to the extension of the Austro-French Trust in respect of the railway lines in the Near East. Germany, he said, took the Roumelian line to be a prolongation of her Anatolian railway, and would not hear of its being conceded to a foreign company, and would also thwart any negotiations set afoot in Belgrade, where she is able to wield a considerable influence. Dumaine was told that if Germany succeeded in upsetting arrangements with the French group, a conflict between Austria and Serbia was a certainty, and German intrigues would then bring about fearful complications which scarcely suggested that Germany was out for peace as we were.

From Constantinople we were also hearing (26th January) that the Bulgarian Minister had been recalled while the Turkish Minister had left Belgrade, and M. Boppe telegraphed that there was much disappointment in official circles about the delay in the Djavid Bey *pourparlers*, and that the *Ottoman Lloyd*, a German organ, was misleading about the political conditions which the French Republic was attaching to the Turkish loan. The day before Colonel Strempel had told the Russian naval agent that, although the Kaiser had given up the idea of handing over the *Moltke* to Turkey, if Russia were to obtain a postponement of the loan, His Majesty might very likely put the *Goeben* at the disposal of the Porte. Now Doumergue had not refused the loan which Turkey begged, nor had he even postponed it indefinitely; he had only stated that to keep the peace in the Levant was to us a matter of primary importance, and this he asked the Porte to guarantee. In what way did this attitude furnish any pretext for handing over the *Goeben*, and what did a threat of this sort really mean ? Telegrams about the Turkish loan are again passing backwards and forwards between Turkey and France. The Grand Vizier has assured Boppe (1) that Turkey has no idea of making the decision of the Powers as to the distribution of the islands an occasion for attacking Greece, and (2) that no part of the loan will be devoted to armaments. Doumergue simply answered that we did not want either to throw cold water on the loan or, on the other hand, to come to terms with Djavid until the Powers had made up their minds how to enforce their decision as to the Isles. Their mind has now been made up, and Greece is to get back all the Ægean islands except Tenedos, Imbros and Kastellorizo, which Turkey will keep ; Greece will guarantee that her islands will neither be fortified nor used for any military purpose. The actual allotment of the islands to Greece will only take place when the Greek troops have evacuated what will be Albanian territory. Such is the decision of the Powers, but up till now they are a little puzzled as to how to cause it to be respected. Two days later Boppe begs us to get on with the loan as quickly as possible ; he thinks that for the last fortnight Djemal, Enver Pasha and their friends have been rather inclined to make up to the Triple Entente, and that to facilitate the matter of the islands, Chios and Mitylene should be exchanged for the Dodecanese. Doumergue thinks that Boppe is deluding himself, and is being got at by the Young Turks, that after all, Chios and Mitylene are to go to Greece to compensate for what she is giving up in Albania, and anyhow, France cannot undo an arrangement come to by the Powers collectively. (Doumergue reminded Boppe of these three points in a telegram of the 29th and repeated that he wanted to get Turkey out of her money difficulties, but did not want all Europe to say that he had provided Turkey with the means to attack Greece. The possibility, he added, of Turkey throwing in her lot with the Triple Entente would be an agreeable proposition if made formally, and simultaneously, to Russia and England.)

On this 29th January M. Delcassé had been received in farewell audience by the Czar, who remarked that the Sanders affair threw considerable light on the German threats to what were essentially Russian interests. Russia's trade was rapidly improving, and the Czar said how impossible it was to allow Germany, masquerading as Turkey, to close the Narrows to Russian exportation. The Czar also spoke of being pelted with letters at the beginning of his reign from his cousin of Germany as to linking up the policy of the three Emperors, and he only stopped these allocutions by saying one day: "I consider my inheritance a sacred trust from my father; I hope you and I may live in peace, but I am absolutely determined to walk in the steps that have been traced out for me". His Majesty, however, I noticed, made then no allusion to the Bjoerke interview. [Vide *Le Lendemain d'Agadir*.]

2nd February.—M. Noulens, the Minister of War, and General Joffre give me details of the new military organisation and of the new defence works, begun a few months ago, round Nancy. For some time the General Staff considered that the old capital of Lorraine would have to be sacrificed in case of German invasion; that unhappy idea has been given up but a good deal remains to be done before the frontier is adequately protected. In the afternoon Pierre Loti receives from my hands his plaque of Grand Officer; he seems as pleased and as proud of the distinction as if he were not Pierre Loti.

In the early days of February there begin again the Anglo-German negotiations respecting the Portuguese colonies which seem to be taking a turn by no means favourable to France. It is a question of Cabinda, a colony embedded in our holdings, and if this were to become

German soil, there will be a danger of the same difficulties cropping up in Central Africa which were dealt with in the 1911 treaty. Cambon was deputed to represent to Sir Edward Grey our anxiety, and was told very sympathetically that Cabinda and Loanda had been allotted by the Anglo-German Convention of 1898 to eventual German possession, that what had been done could not be undone, and that England could not go back on her engagements. Cambon, in the course of a long despatch, said that this Convention had as a matter of fact been directed against France, that it had taken place when Fashoda was on the tapis, and when Great Britain was making ready to conquer the Transvaal and Orange States, also that a certain number of by no means unimportant Englishmen had coveted part, if not all, of our Colonial Empire.

> "If the South African War had been finished off quickly," he went on, "the question of Madagascar might have arisen, and war between France and England might have been on the cards. The German Government was quite alive to this at the time, and their Ambassador, Count Hatzfeldt, had connived at conversations on colonial matters between Baron Eckhardtstein and Mr. Chamberlain. Thanks to Mr. Chamberlain's influence, Count Hatzfeldt forced Lord Salisbury's hand and signed with Mr. Balfour a treaty which was eventually to divide up the Portuguese colonies and which Germany thought would pave the way to dividing up ours."

Paul Cambon said further that when he first arrived in England he had found men in public positions who were quite ready to go in with Germany and mop up our Colonial Empire. Our Ambassador was emphatic that Sir Edward Grey and such like were happily quite of another opinion, and he had always been on excellent terms with them, but, he added, "we must not forget the real German design of 1898, for the Imperial Chancery is steadily persevering in its aim and believes that the revision, and more especially the publication, of the Treaty will forge links between her and England and enable her a little later to do mischief to France". Paul Cambon rightly believed that the publication of the Treaty would have a bad effect here, and urged the British Government against such a course. But to deal with the Berlin Cabinet is a far more ticklish affair, and Jules Cambon was told to be very reserved on the subject; he was, however, to remind the German Government of Article XVI. in the Franco-German Agreement of 1911, which recited that any modification of the statute respecting the agreed-upon basin of the Congo must be referred to the States which were signatory to the Berlin Act. Cabinda and part of Loanda are within the basin, and Jules Cambon very discreetly asked Herr Jagow about the negotiations to which the German Press was then alluding. The answer was that the negotiations were strictly confidential, but Cambon delicately projected into the conversation Article XVI., an article which as a matter of fact was introduced at the request of Herr Kiderlen. Jagow did not know, or pretended he did not know, that some of the Portuguese colonies at stake were in the Congo Basin, although it would seem odd that a signature less than two and a half years old should already have become indistinct.

At a dinner at the Turkish Embassy on the 4th February the Ambassador is all smiles, and Djavid Bey professes that his country will give every possible proof of her peaceful intention, that although she may protest against the cession of her islands to Greece, she will not proceed to any hostilities. And he points out that before the flotation of any loan a total lack of funds would be an effective guarantee of peace, and that after such loan had been granted, our own surveillance would be sufficient. But he laughingly agrees to my suggestion that nations sometimes go to war simply because they want money.

Doumergue foresaw that internal political objections might be raised to the Turkish loan, but he was able to persuade his colleagues in office that anything was better than throwing Turkey into the arms of Germany, and he advised that *pourparlers* should go on between Paris and Constantinople with a view to a deal in the summer, if in the interim Turkey were to keep faith.

Sunday the 8th February brings quite a little batch of bad news. The Triple Alliance has told Sir Edward Grey that it would be better to postpone any definite agreement among the Powers as to how they would enforce their ruling, and that they should begin by notifying Athens and Constantinople what the London Conference had laid down about the islands. Prince Lichnowsky has intimated to Sir Edward that Germany would never be party to any coercion of Turkey, and the Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Imperiali, has admitted that before taking up any threatening attitude towards the Porte Italy must await a favourable reply to her demand with regard to the concessions in Asia Minor. Such was the unity of Europe at the beginning of 1914!

From St. Petersburg we hear that M. Paschitch, when wishing good-bye to the Foreign Office, spoke of the conflict which he thought inevitable between Turkey and Greece, and which would mean a general blaze in the Balkans, as the Serbs would surely go in with the Greeks; Sazonoff apparently thought that the only way to prevent a third Balkan campaign would be to notify the Turks of the decision arrived at by the Powers, and to emphasise such notification by a naval demonstration. That sounded all right, but how could Sazonoff's drastic proposal be carried out if Germany, Austria and Italy held aloof? It would only mean a break up of the European concert, and we should give Turkey a pretty proof alike of our dissensions and our disabilities. At the same time Boppe tells us that Turkey is in the depths of financial trouble; she owes six months' salary to her officials, she cannot feed either her soldiers or her police; there is no means of keeping order, and a revolution may break out; the loan is urgent.

On the 10th February Sir Francis Bertie came to see me; he had just been sent for by the King, who wished to see him in London, and he begged that the review of our troops, as to which there had been some doubt, might take place, as otherwise it might look as if the King were neglecting the French Army. I spoke to Sir Francis as to the Portuguese colonies; he was rather hazy about Loanda and Cabinda, although he knew that the 1898 Treaty had been signed by Mr. Balfour in Lord Salisbury's absence, and that both Lord Salisbury and Lord Lansdowne disliked it; but, he said, the Convention was there, and could not be torn up without Germany's consent. I reminded Sir Francis that the Treaty now under consideration would strengthen the previous one and would not have the excuse of being drawn up at a moment when France and England were rather at loggerheads. Besides—and this was not my personal opinion, but the opinion of our Government—how could we recognise—and bow to—a dividing up of territory which was the handiwork of only two nations without any regard to the Berlin Act or our Treaty of 1911? Sir Francis was evidently rather struck by this idea, and promised to write to Grey at once.

The Powers are not yet agreed as to the delivery of their Note to Greece and Turkey and Doumergue telegraphs to London on the 11th that the delay is very mischievous and that the Powers should make known their decision even if they had not decided how they would enforce it at Athens and Constantinople; Paul Cambon seems to be in fear that the bare notification might set Greece asking for guarantees, that Turkey still had her eye fixed on Chios and Mitylene, and that if Europe did not announce her measures at the same time as her mind, there might be something of an impasse.

To complicate matters still further, Austria and Italy, bound by their old ties, are going hand in hand as regards Albania. They ask the new-born State for a concession for an Austro-Italian Bank which—despite the ruling of the London Conference—is not to have an international character; they agree, at their own risk and for their personal profit, to lend a large sum of money to the Prince of Wied, whom Europe, wishing to please the Central Powers, has selected to reign in Albania and who was about to claim his throne. In a word, Austria and Italy mean to elbow away the other Powers and to exploit Albania for themselves. At the same moment the German Colonel Nicolai, who has been in temporary charge of the Scutari division, from which he was due to be withdrawn, is confirmed by Turkey in his command. Germany thus clutches at the

Narrows, while Austria and Italy pick their way into Albania and Russia complains that France and England are too languid about Russian interests; it looks altogether as if the Triple Alliance were scoring diplomatic points over the Triple Entente.

CHAPTER XIV

On the 13th February I learn with real regret that the Czar has accepted the resignation of the Russian Prime Minister, M. Kokovtzoff. His powers were much circumscribed, but his influence was excellent: a straightforward, level-headed man and, above all, a strong advocate of peace, he has been one of the most valuable collaborators in the Triple Entente; one cannot but be anxious as to who will succeed him.

On the 14th February comes news that Herr Jagow has made a good move; he has told Jules Cambon that he recognises some of the Portuguese colonies lie in the Congo basin, that no territorial change will take place without the consent of France, and that Article XVI. will be observed. Doumergue at once telegraphs to London that this decision should enable the British Government to arrange things to our satisfaction.

Sir Edward Grey is publishing the notice about the islands for which the Powers have pressed, but reserves further action, so that Europe is still rather bewildered, and Turkey can reap profit from our dissensions. Paléologue, who has just arrived at St. Petersburg, telegraphs that M. Goremykine will succeed Kokovtzoff; I have never met the Russian Prime Minister elect and know nothing of his merits. Sazonoff, according to Paléologue, regrets very keenly the loss of the outgoing Minister and is very reserved as to the newcomer who, he thinks, will not long hold office and will have no portfolio. Sazonoff says there will be no change in external policy, but there is a fear in Liberal quarters that Goremykine may contemplate reactionary measures. This is rather vague and not very reassuring information.

This evening we give a ball to 5000 people at the Élysée; perhaps too many invitations for the space, certainly too few to satisfy all who wanted to come. I have much talk with all the Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers; I remind Count Szecsen—who discourses about Albania—that two years ago he had promised me that equal financial and economic rights for all nations would be instituted there. This arrangement seems to be forgotten now that Austria and Italy are claiming for themselves sixty per cent of the capital of the Albanian Bank; the Ambassador cannot refute this and very politely gives me to understand that his Government has not said the last word on this point. Isvolsky confides to me with some little bitterness his apprehensions with regard to Kokovtzoff's retirement, although I never noticed that he was particularly enamoured of that Minister who had told me once he had no great faith in him. But Isvolsky could not be blind to the worth — intellectual and moral — of the outgoing President, and feared his resignation might be the signal for some reaction. The Ambassador seems very gloomy this evening; he keeps the Czar and his entourage out of the conversation and is very discreet, but he is evidently obsessed by the recollection of popular troubles which he has witnessed; and if he seems to dislike reaction, it is not so much reaction itself as that he thinks it capable of bringing revolution in its train.

17th *February*.—Doumergue informs the Council that the Grand Vizier has sent a rather ambiguous answer to the Note which the Powers delivered. The Ottoman Government recognises that Europe has decided to restore to Turkey Imbros, Tenedos and Kastellorizo, and that as to Chios and Mitylene, that Government, "conscious of its duty and appreciating the benefits of peace, will do its utmost to make good its just and legitimate claims". He will be a clever man who could say whether this phrase indicates resistance, or submission to, the will of Europe.

On the 19th the Prince of Wied comes to breakfast; he has paid his respects to the King of England and is *en route* to Albania;[1] a tall, pleasant-mannered German youth with artistic tendencies, he seems totally ignorant of the conditions of the country over the destinies of which he is to preside, and, as if to excuse himself, tells me that he has been to Palestine and Egypt.

On the 22nd Paul Cambon, fresh from London, says the King himself does not want the Anglo-German agreement about the Portuguese colonies to be published; both the British Sovereign and the British Government are anxious to do nothing which might wound French susceptibilities; and as Sir Edward Grey would never sign a secret treaty, Cambon devoutly hopes the whole thing will fall to the ground. He also tells me that he had seen M. Caillaux, who, still smarting under his little altercation with Sir Francis three years ago, is anxious to get back into England's good graces before becoming Président du Conseil. Like M. Clemenceau, M. Caillaux never really wants anything except the top place. Whether this is a sign of strength the future will tell, but anyhow M. Doumergue is still very much alive.

23rd February.—Sir Francis Bertie has seen the King and Sir Edward Grey and tells me the King does not want the Treaty with Germany to be published before His Majesty's visit to France. Paul Cambon has, of course, asked that it should not be published at all; the difference is important but anyhow we have six weeks reprieve.

On the 2nd March our new Ambassador, M. Paléologue,[2] telegraphs an account of his audience with the Czar, who expressed the hope that some day the Triple Entente would become a Triple Alliance. Paléologue very wisely answered that England, as a matter of principle, was averse to contracting any alliance unless a war were imminent, and for the present all that could be expected would be the same military defensive arrangements which existed with France, capable of being transformed into actual allied relations under any threat of hostilities. Paléologue added, however, that if the Czar would like it, Doumergue might approach Sir Edward Grey on the subject, and in the event of a favourable answer I would say a word to King George when he came to Paris. The Czar simply said he would be very grateful to Doumergue and myself if we would do this.

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[1] [The throne was offered to Prince Alexander of Teck, brother-in-law of King George.—G. A.].

[2] Paléologue told us a few days earlier that the crisis due to Kokovtzoff's retirement was not over and that various influences were swaying the Czar's vacillating will.

A day or two earlier I had a long visit from the Comte de Gontaut Biron, fresh from St. Petersburg, where he had been staying with the Grand Duchess Vladimir, who told him that Kokovtzoff's resignation was the result of an intrigue. The Prime Minister two years earlier had intercepted a correspondence between the Empress and Rasputin in which there was nothing affecting the honour of the Empress but which showed that the ineffable monk was intimately concerned both with family and public matters. The moujik was for the time being sent away, but came back to have his revenge. He so played upon the Empress's maternal feelings that, under pretext of hearing the confessions of the little Grand Duchesses, he was allowed to go to their bedsides, and his renewed sway over Her Majesty was so great that she was able to induce the Emperor to part with his trusted and wholly trustworthy Premier. This is just how the Czar's feeble knees cause his straightforwardness to look like duplicity.

6th March.—M. Clemenceau, who never leaves me out of his *Homme Libre*, now accuses me of conspiring, with the complicity of Briand, Barthou and Millerand, against the Cabinet. As this is getting a little past a joke, I write to the President of the Council to this effect :

"I do not know if you have seen Clemenceau's article of yesterday. I know there is no necessity for me to defend myself to you and your colleagues against an accusation of disloyalty which is as ridiculous as it is offensive. . . . But there may be people in Parliament who are sufficiently ill-informed as to take this sort of thing seriously. Clemenceau is not a mere journalist, but a distinguished Senator and an ex-Prime Minister, and it may be necessary to put out a disclaimer as to a charge against the man now occupying the post of President of the Republic. . . ."

7th March.—Doumergue comes to see me and tells me in so many words that he is ready to exonerate me in all circumstances, and that he will say so categorically before the elections take place. He thought he had appeased Clemenceau, but sees he has failed. Clemenceau is not a man to be appeased if he does not want to be.

In the afternoon a long discussion as to whether the Admiralty or the War Office shall be responsible for the protection of the sea fronts at important places. Doumergue agrees with me that General Joffre is right in urging that the bill as to the cadres and units of the Army must be passed this session.

9th March.—The Grand Duke Nicholas Michael pays me a visit: he is a historian, a man of letters, a member of the Institut de France, highly cultivated and very intelligent, *but* too hasty in his judgments and too fond of ill-natured tittle-tattle. He says that Paléologue goes about too much in "smart society" at St. Petersburg, that he allows himself to be got at by the Grand Duchess Vladimir, who is not in great favour at Court, and who is not always quite fair in what she says. But the Grand Duke himself inveighs equally against the Empress, and is as flippant as is apparently the Grand Duchess Vladimir in his allusions to her, besides rather gleefully rolling out a string of Rasputin stories. I wonder if he proposes to write a history of his country with all this gossip.

10*th March.*—M. Calmette relentlessly pursues his attacks on Caillaux and hashes up again the Rochette story; the public seems rather to enjoy this sort of scandal. . . .

In the evening we give a big dinner to Loubet, Fallières, their families and their former staffs. (I have retained most of Fallières' staff for myself.) How I envy my two predecessors! They have done their duty splendidly by their country, and they are now free to go, do, and say as they please.

13*th March.*—While Clemenceau without a shred of evidence is reproaching me with owing my election to the Right and with favouring religious interests, M. Judet is roundly scolding me in to-day's *Éclair* for having in 1912 broken off the relations which a year earlier one of our attachés at the Quirinal had formed with the Vatican. Nothing could be further from the real truth. I have simply put an end to semi-secret and tortuous reports which Parliament had never authorised and which could not be pleasing to the Holy See, as the Holy Father is always opposed to anything irregular or indirect. Too white for some, too red or too blue for others, I am not greatly concerned with the glass through which people watch me and only try to walk straight forward without changing my colours.

14th March.—Stendhal said that if you wanted to know a man you must watch him every morning when he is starting on the " hunt for happiness ". This is a kind of sport poorly known at the Élysée, and it is perhaps for this reason that the masters of this house are so little known. Happiness ! To-day again I have not even caught at its shadow. The Ministerial Council, on Doumergue's request, has been postponed till Monday, but in the morning Caillaux comes to my room, scarlet in the face, and gesticulating wildly. As the result of Calmette's articles there was yesterday, as might well be expected, an incident in Parliament regarding the Rochette affair. The Government obtained a majority, but the discussion is to be resumed, apparently, on Tuesday. To quote Cardinal Retz, who is one of M. Caillaux's heroes, the Finance Minister this morning looks like a man who feels himself, " touché à la prunelle de l'œil ". M. Calmette is by no means climbing down. He published yesterday an old private letter in which Caillaux boasted of having done away with a tax on revenue while pretending to keep it up. Caillaux replied by a Havas note on which Calmette harked back to the Rochette question. It is certainly a pitiless Press campaign, which no political opinions can account for, and which contrasts very sharply with the style to which the readers of the *Figaro* are accustomed. " That is not all," M. Caillaux says to me. " I have positive knowledge that Calmette is going to publish a note which was drawn up for his own justification by M. Fabre, the Procureur-Général. This official avers that in 1911 my Government insisted on the Rochette affair being postponed, and that he then suffered the greatest humiliation of his life. You see how they are trying to hem me in. But I am quite able to defend myself, and I shall do so. M. Fabre has told me himself, not once but twice, things which absolutely contradict this note and which I shall repeat. It was Rochette's lawyer, M. Maurice Bernard, who asked the Court to set the matter back. If they go for me I shall be obliged to drag in Briand and Barthou, who, as custodians of the Seals, had the Fabre note in their hands, and one of whom has probably talked about it. All this will be deplorable, and it is really to the public interest to prevent such lamentable disclosures."

M. Caillaux plunges into a mass of details, and ends up with asking me to question, if I cannot see, M. Briand and M. Barthou. I consent to do this, but am greatly distressed at the scandals which in the present state of Europe seem to fly in the face of reason. As Doumergue breakfasts with me at the Élysée to meet Prince George and Princess Marie of Greece, I can tell him about my talk with Caillaux, and like myself he is sadly annoyed by these squabbles. Caillaux, who thinks that Briand and Barthou are attacking him, is burning to answer back, but of what possible use can this domestic conflict be ?

Briand is at St. Étienne and I cannot see him for a few days ; Barthou tells me that Fabre's note has passed through his hands, but he has no idea of divulging it and does not believe that Calmette thinks of publishing it. M. Bienvenu-Martin, the Keeper of the Seals, tells me that he has not found the script of the Procureur-Général at the Chancellery ; M. Fabre has explained to him that the paper, of which so many people are talking without having read it, is the copy of a little memorandum which he drew up for his own personal use and then left at the Ministry ; he remembers having alluded to it to certain people and even to have quoted certain expressions in it. M. Bienvenu-Martin, who is a man of delicate honour, is evidently much upset by these nasty stories.

15*th March*.—My dear friend, Alfred Mézières, always youthful in spite of his 88 years, has begged me to preside to-day over the dinner of Paris journalists, and I take the opportunity of urging on the Press to observe the utmost courtesy and moderation, and I can say: "The President of the Republic, who, like your Association, stands outside politics, and whose duty it is, as it is yours, to respect the perfect freedom of all parties, cannot but be grateful to you for so successfully showing, by your laws and by your acts, that despite the widest differences of opinion, there exist always among French compatriots the deepest reasons for mutual agreement and confidence." Alas! we are very far from the ideal which I tried to suggest, and seldom has opinion been more feverish than it is to-day.

16*th March*.—Doumergue and Caillaux tell me they hear that an evening paper is about to publish the Fabre Note, and that in such case Briand and Barthou will lie open to a charge of gross indiscretion, as they will seem to have kept possession of a public document and used it as a political weapon; the leaders of both political parties will thus be incriminated by a newspaper scoop. When Doumergue left my room Caillaux remained behind; he was evidently labouring under great emotion when he said that Calmette was now going to publish some purely private letters which had fallen into his hand, and that if this happened there would be nothing left but for Caillaux to shoot him. I tried to allay Caillaux's fears in this respect, and even offered to see his lawyer, M. Maurice Bernard, who knew Calmette personally and would talk to him. Caillaux pulled himself together wonderfully for the Cabinet meeting which followed, and calmly discussed the financial statement which he was going to present to Parliament; in the afternoon I saw Briand and Barthou, who were open-mouthed as to their wish to prevent any further scandal, but at seven o'clock in the evening there comes over the telephone the news that Madame Caillaux has given herself up to the police with the statement that she has fired several shots at Calmette in his room at the office of the *Figaro*.

At a big dinner this evening at the Italian Embassy I find Madame Caillaux was to have been my neighbour; her place is taken by Madame Stephen Pichon, who is a great friend of Calmette and who seems terribly upset. After the dinner

Jules Roche describes to me how Madame Caillaux obtained access to Calmette,[1] who was talking to Paul Bourget when her card was brought in and who smilingly said that he could not refuse to see a lady ; Doumergue tells me that Caillaux has already proffered his resignation, which has been refused. News keeps coming in during the evening as to Calmette's wounds, which at first were thought not to be mortal, but on reaching the Élysée we heard that one of the bullets had penetrated the rectum, that internal hæmorrhage had set in, and that all was over. Poor Calmette ! he made a great mistake in his campaign against Caillaux. He mixed up with political reproaches—which he was perfectly justified in levelling against a political adversary—a whole lot of insufficiently balanced allegations. He let himself be persuaded to publish a private letter and allowed people to think that he had others to disclose. But he fought openly, and if he was too careless as to the weapon he used, he had, I am sure, no other impulse than to stand up for his own beliefs.

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[1] An Italian lady informed us as she feverishly fanned herself that she was on the staff of the *Figaro*, and was at the office when the tragedy happened ; she was sure that other letters were about to be published. I could not somehow help thinking that this elegant person was one of those who had been telling the Minister—whether truthfully or not—of Calmette's intentions.

[The trial of Madame Caillaux—who was defended by Maître Labori—lasted several days, and resulted on the 28th July in her acquittal of the charge of murder, premeditated or otherwise.—G. A.].

CHAPTER XV

Very early the next morning (17th March) Doumergue is with me, no smile on his lips and with a distinct cloud on his brow. He has not as yet accepted Caillaux's resignation, but he is sure the Ministry must be reconstructed. In the afternoon occurs another—but a minor—*coup de théâtre.* The Rochette affair being mentioned in the Chamber, Barthou takes from his pocket, and reads out, M. Fabre's original note. This paper is therefore made public otherwise than in the columns of the *Figaro*, and the adversaries of Caillaux will probably exploit it against him. But Caillaux has also some very staunch friends, and some of these, less well-informed than he is himself, try to mix me up with the wretched matter of which I know nothing, some papers, such as the *Guerre Sociale,* flying in the face of truth, with the suggestion that I was the chief instigator of the Calmette campaign. And at the very moment when Caillaux is effusively thanking me for the confidence and sympathy I have shown him during his term of office, I hear that in the *couloirs* of the Chamber some of his partisans are hawking the same, and even more ridiculous and odious, calumnies.

But the Governmental intervention in the Rochette affair is not to be attributed to Caillaux only; it is incidentally due also to M. Monis, who was then President of the Council and who had yielded to the entreaty of his colleague. M. Monis is now Minister for the Navy, and Doumergue is expecting every moment his resignation which is tendered during the Mi-Carême fete just when the "Queen" at the Élysée is receiving a bracelet from Madame Poincaré.

Calmette's brothers come to the Élysée to thank me for my sympathy and assure me that among the papers of the dead man there is no private letter written by Caillaux, and that therefore there could have been no question of publishing such. But they have found a word-for-word reproduction of M. Fabre's note, and two copies of the famous " verts " of 1911 in Calmette's handwriting. These latter my visitors hand over to me telling me that they are too well aware of their seriousness to keep them, and I accept them in the spirit offered with the understanding that I must at once inform Doumergue. As a matter of fact Baron Schoen had just been to see Doumergue and after chatting on various matters had said in an offhand way : " What is all this matter about the *télégrammes verts :* I mean the story in some of the newspapers as to the Franco-German negotiations of 1911 ? " Doumergue said nothing was known at the Foreign Office, and at the end of their talk asked the Ambassador if he were not soon going to the Riviera. " Not yet ", was the reply ; " I must stay in Paris in case this affair should blow up," so, we are warned. Germany has known since 1911 that the Quai d'Orsay has deciphered her telegrams ; she knew it so well that she made another code, and in 1914 we had not as yet been able to make it out ; she does not want this fact to be divulged and, if it is, there will be an explosion which is sure to entail an official *démarche* from the Ambassador.

As I must not mix myself up in the elections, my thoughts dwell more and more on the Foreign Office despatches which Doumergue shows me. On the 4th April Paléologue telegraphs :

" My British colleague was received yesterday in private audience by the Czar, who emphasised the same arguments which he had addressed to me with regard to an Anglo-Russian alliance. The Czar only thought of such an alliance as defensive, but ardently desired it as the best guarantee of peace. Sir George Buchanan, who is himself all for an alliance, could not pretend that his Government shared his views, and the Czar seemed much disappointed. If the British Government persists in refusing an agreement which is categorically offered, there is good reason to fear that the Triple Entente may be compromised. One must not forget that there are here many influential persons—especially in the Court circle—who would advocate more intimate relations with Germany. Once the Czar is sure that he cannot set afoot any precise and permanent policy in conjunction with England, will he not lend his ear to the insidious appeals which emanate from Berlin ? I would add that the Czar has thought the thing out when he insists on the necessity of strengthening the Triple Entente if we are to ensure the maintenance of peace."

Doumergue sent a résumé of this telegram to London, but neither he nor I have any illusions as to what England's answer will be. She will not join up with Russia any more than with us, and we are confirmed in our opinion by Paul Cambon who has come over to see me about King George's approaching visit. He thinks that should the Conservatives come back to power, Lord Curzon would be Foreign Secretary ; although, as Viceroy, Lord Curzon was dead against Russia, he is now a staunch partisan of the Triple Entente, and only the other day said to Sir Arthur Nicolson that he himself would like an actual Alliance with France but that no House of Commons would hear of it. The Ambassador proceeded to tell us that King George was tasting the troubles which always beset the constitutional head of a State in a really free country. The Conservatives were reproaching him for letting the Liberal Government do just what it likes ; they say that it would have been quite another story with Queen Victoria, or even King Edward, on the throne. They cling to the hope that the King will not give the Royal Assent to the Home Rule Bill, as, if he does, it may be a case of civil war. Then, on the other hand, he has been attacked by a Labour Member in the House and accused of encouraging military officers to send in their papers so as not to have to carry out their legal orders when the Irish crisis comes. This Member of Parliament was invited to be the guest of honour at a banquet and his friends had been warmly congratulating him. The King is thus between two converging fires, and the contradictory calumnies have so disturbed him that there is even talk of postponing his visit to France. Happily, however, Cambon said, there was no question of this, and the King's stay in

Paris will probably do him a lot of good by giving him a change of scene.

In the interim before the royal visit we take a delightful villa at Eze, where we enjoy as far as possible freedom from cares and ceremonies, and where one might have forgotten acrimonious political discussion, if one's ears had not been assailed by echoes from the electoral campaigns being waged.

Just before my return to Paris there appeared in the *Times* of the 16th April the letter from M. Ernest Lavisse, in which he insisted on the influence for peace which the Triple Entente could, and should, exercise; the letter, however, was not flavoured to German taste, and Prince Lichnowsky, the least fire-eating of all Germans, said to Mr. Wickham Steed: "What a stupid letter Lavisse has written in your paper; fancy talking of limiting armaments". Prince Lichnowsky was sure that the letter was the joint effort of Steed and Lavisse, while I had seen an advance copy and authorised its publication, and thus the President of the Republic was as innocent as the English journalist or the French historian of any aggressive design.

We come back to the Élysée in time to receive the King and Queen, due to arrive in Paris on the afternoon of the 21st April. That morning Isvolsky begged to see me, as he was under orders from his Government to entreat me to do all I could to persuade King George to enter, if not into a treaty with Russia, at least into arrangements such as had been made between England and ourselves. I could only reply that the King would certainly not stir a step apart from his Government; that Doumergue would talk to Sir Edward Grey, who would be the Minister in attendance, and that I would consult with Doumergue as to how much or how little I should say to the King.

At half-past four on a lovely spring afternoon Madame Poincaré and I start for the Port Dauphine station; our *calèche de gala* was a modest equipage as compared with the State carriages in the Buckingham Palace mews, but it was by no means a bad turn-out with its four-in-hand of really fine black horses. The Royal train arrives, and the King alights from it, punctually to the moment ; I present to His Majesty, who is in his Admiral's uniform, and then to the Queen, who is dressed in pale blue, my wife, the Presidents of the two Chambers, and the members of the Government. The King makes a rapid inspection of the company of the Republican Guard, and then takes his place in the Presidential calèche, the Queen and Madame Poincaré occupying another gala carriage, with the mingled suites following, Sir E. Grey and M. Doumergue sitting side by side.

Here and there, all along the route, military bands are stationed, and " God save the King " alternates with the " Marseillaise ". The King is at no pains to conceal his delight, both at the enormous crowds who had come out to see him and at the unbounded enthusiasm which they displayed ; the Queen is no less touched, and a slight—but very attractive—shyness does not prevent her from expressing her pleasure. We escort the illustrious couple to the apartments prepared for them at the Foreign Office, and a few minutes later they pay us their formal visit at the Élysée, when, according to custom, we precede them to the Salon des Tapisseries, and bring them back to the grand Salon, from the windows of which they heartily admire our gardens and envy us the floral beauty which marks a Paris spring.

King George then hands me the five large medallions, the work of Desjardins, which, given to Louis XIV. by the Duc de la Feuillade, had formed part of the ornamentation of the King's statue in the Place des Victoires ; these, after the destruction of the statue, had been taken to England to remain in the keeping of the Royal family. " I gladly take this opportunity ", said King George in graceful phrase, " of returning these works of art to France." The personal present of the King to myself is a really beautiful George II. cup, while the Queen asks Madame Poincaré to accept a miniature watch of exquisite workmanship.

In the evening a big official dinner in the huge room, where the Gobelins do a good deal to hide the impossibly florid walls, but where the ceiling looks down on us in all its hideous decorativeness. The King again and again alludes to his glowing reception in the streets, which has been a happy experience and which in some little way makes up for his own political worries which he does not conceal. He says, however, that the Press has exaggerated the matter of officers being placed on half-pay, and that it was perhaps a mistake to put provisional questions to them; to ask them whether they would agree to carry out their legal instructions was tantamount to asking them to act according to their own inclinations. The military incident was, however, closed, and the question of Home Rule was acute. "I really cannot let a civil war be started," the King vehemently said. "Nor, as a matter of fact, have I the power which some of the Conservatives blame me for not using; the whole situation is very difficult." If in proposing the King's health I dwell on our intense appreciation of the Entente, and if the King's reply,[1] delivered with a slight British accent which did nothing to mar

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[1] PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

"La visite que Votre Majesté et Sa Majesté la Reine rendent aujourd'hui à la France est l'éclatante consécration d'une amitié qui a désormais subi l'épreuve du temps et de l'expérience, qui a démontré son efficacité permanente et qui répond aux volontés réfléchies de deux puissantes nations, également attachées à la paix, également passionnées pour le progrès, également accoutumées aux mœurs de la liberté. Pendant les heures trop brèves que Votre Majesté passera parmi nous, Elle ne pourra, sans doute, voir la France que sous un petit nombre de ses aspects physiques et moraux. Les fêtes artistiques, sportives et militaires auxquelles Elle a aimablement promis d'assister Lui présenteront cependant, sous un forme sommaire, quelques éléments de notre caractère national; et Elle retrouvera sans peine dans les vertus qu'honore notre démocratie, plusieurs des forces traditionnelles qui ont fait, depuis si longtemps, la grandeur et la gloire d'Angleterre : le sens de la mesure, de l'ordre et de la discipline sociale, la conscience éclairée du devoir patriotique, l'acceptation joyeuse des sacrifices nécessaires, le culte fervent d'un idéal qui ne s'éclipse jamais et qui remplit de lumière toute la vie d'une nation. Après une longue rivalité qui leur avait laissé d'immortelles leçons d'estime et de respect mutuels, la France et la Grande-Bretagne ont appris à s'aimer, à rapprocher leurs pensées et à unir leurs efforts. Il y a aujourd'hui dix ans que les deux gouvernements ont réglé à l'aimable les questions qui les divisaient. Les accords qu'ils ont passés à cette date et dont la clairvoyance de Sa Majesté le Roi Édouard VII et de ses conseillers avait si heureusement préparé la réalisation, ont tout naturellement donné naissance à une entente plus générale, qui est dorénavant l'une des plus sûres garanties de l'équilibre européen. Je ne doute pas que, sous les auspices de Votre Majesté et de Son gouverne-

its effect, ran on the same line, neither of us make any allusion to the Triple Entente, or say a word either to suggest setting group against group or which might touch the susceptibilities of the Triple Alliance.

The next day magnificent weather, only marred by a superfluity of dust, favours the review at Vincennes, whither the King, in the scarlet of a Field-Marshal, goes with me in a gala landau drawn by six gun horses with their riders. The carriage in which the Queen and Madame Poincaré drive is a very pretty turn-out with its six dappled greys and bewigged postilions. All along our road to the review ground and on our return journey to the Hôtel de Ville the crowds cheer vociferously, and King George is radiant with delight at a greeting which seems to surpass altogether what he had expected.

In the evening a dinner at the British Embassy, a gala at the Opera, with the Rue de la Paix beautifully decorated and brilliantly illuminated. All passes off without any hitch, but so far no opportunity for a word as to Russia's request.

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ment, ces liens d'intimité ne se resserrent tous les jours davantage, au grand profit de la civilisation et de la paix universelle. C'est le vœu très sincère que je forme au nom de la France."

THE KING'S SPEECH

" J'éprouve un plaisir tout particulier à me trouver au milieu du peuple français lors du dixième anniversaire de ces accords par lesquels nos deux pays ont réglé pacifiquement toutes les questions qui les divisaient. C'est de ces accords que sont sorties les relations si intimes et si cordiales qui nous unissent aujourd'hui et grâce auxquelles il nous est permis de travailler à l'œuvre humanitaire de la civilisation et de la paix. Je vous remercie, monsieur le Président, d'avoir rappelé que le nom de mon père bien-aimé restera toujours associé à votre éloquente définition des desseins élevés et nobles que nos deux pays poursuivent en commun. Leur réalisation sera un bienfait pour les deux nations, en même temps qu'elle constituera le legs le plus précieux, que nous puissions laisser aux générations à venir. La Reine et moi, nous n'oublierons jamais la réception si cordiale qui nous à été accordée à notre arrivée et qui sera très hautement appréciée dans mon pays. Je suis heureux de penser que, pendant notre séjour, nous aurons le plaisir d'admirer et d'apprécier ce que vous venez d'appeler si justement quelques éléments de votre caractère national. Ce sont ces éléments qui ont élevé la France à un si haut degré de civilisation et de prospérité ; c'est surtout grâce à eux qu'elle occupe si dignement et si fièrement sa place dans le monde."

The morning of the 23rd is left free for the Royal personages to make their own arrangements; the afternoon is spent at Auteuil, where the racecourse is thronged, and where the people seem to consider horses (and backing them) as quite a secondary consideration to getting a good look at the English King and Queen. A tumult of cheers goes up as we escort our guests to the tent where tea is served, and where we have invited to meet them Princess Marie of Greece, the Dowager Duchesse d'Uzès—whom the Queen had met at the Château de Dampierre—and Madame Waddington, formerly Ambassadress in London, a close friend of the late Duchess of Teck, and whom the Queen had specially asked to be bidden.

Just before the dinner in the evening at the Foreign Office, Doumergue tells me that Sir Edward Grey quite favourably entertains the idea of a naval agreement between London and St. Petersburg on the lines of our own, and during the dinner I am able to mention to the King the earnest wishes of his Imperial Cousin. "Yes, indeed," is the ready reply, "it would be a capital thing if we could have the same naval arrangements as yourselves; you should talk to Grey about it." After dinner I broach the subject to Sir Edward, who is a little hesitant; he by no means dislikes the idea, but the Liberal Party might object to any alliance with an autocratic Government. He must talk to Mr. Asquith about it, and so forth. I tell him that I quite understand the difficulty, and that it is not always easy for ourselves to have a permanent alliance with an absolute monarchy, and that we are even further than the British Government from such an institution. But as far as England was concerned, Russia did not suggest any alliance, but a naval agreement which only involved technical considerations and left perfect freedom of action to both countries.

The next morning Madame Poincaré and I repair to the Quai d'Orsay and, on foot, take the King and Queen along the Rue Constantine—where dwelt such close friends of their parents as the Duchesse de Mouchy and the Marquise de Galliffet—to the Invalides Station, outside which the British colony is scarcely able to cheer more lustily than our own people. The visit with all its festivities is over ; it only remains for the Sovereigns to say—and to say with evident sincerity—how greatly that visit has been enjoyed, and to bestow a farewell smile on the town which has indeed made them welcome. Without any exaggeration it is fair comment that the stay of the President in London in 1913, and the stay of the King and Queen in Paris in 1914, contributed not a little to fortify the Entente, and this was no negligible consideration in a Europe constantly threatened by the dark shadow of war.

Having recorded my vote on the 26th April I can take another three weeks (comparative) holiday at Eze, the while the elections are favouring the extreme Left. I return to Paris on the 15th May, to bear in silence the taunts of the various newspapers which accuse me of not sufficiently using my authority with the Minister of the Interior and the Government generally, and to read the two columns of satire which Clemenceau is daily devoting to me. On the 16th the Ministerial Council resumes its sittings, and the War Minister has to tell me of his anxieties, due to the rash promises which some of the candidates have made regarding the Three Years' Service ; Nolens puts his foot down and is determined to maintain this intact whatever the proclivities of the new Parliament.

That same afternoon the King and Queen of Denmark arrive on their official visit. Like his Cousin of England, Christian X. is a constitutional Sovereign, and constitutional sovereignty has its strict limitations, but a Monarch anyhow is clothed with all that a dynasty implies, and can stand to his people as the pure and shining symbol of his country whereas the elected President of a Republic is only an exalted politician who may at any moment return to the rank and file of politicians, and who, even as Chief Magistrate, has to reckon with his partisans and opponents in Parliament. He can never quite shake off the dust of the political arena, nor wholly rid himself of the recollection of his political past, and even if he has entirely put off the old man, he is only a shadowy symbol of the nation. As I drive with the King from the station to the Quai d'Orsay I ask myself if I indeed represent France to these good people who cheer and cheer again, or is it the great black horses harnessed four in hand to the State *daumont* with their bejacketed and bewigged postilions to whom the huzzas are really addressed ? King Christian is tall and slight, and with his Guards' busby looks even taller than he really is. He understands French perfectly and speaks it fairly well, and is very quick to take a joke. His Government at the moment is disposed to lean towards Germany, but he himself declares that he likes our country better than any other ; he delights in coming here, and it was on the Côte d'Azur that he first met his Consort. She is a daughter of the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who was our very pleasant neighbour at Eze and has come to Paris to be with her daughter and son-in-law. The Queen, whose other sister is the Crown Princess of Germany, has very simple tastes and rather rebels against the restrictions of her rank, and if she had her way would like to walk about in the streets of Paris, go into the shops, and spend the evenings at the theatre.

The King gives me the White Elephant, an ancient order of chivalry which Christian V. revived in 1693, and which entitles me to wear on ceremonial occasions a mantle of crimson velvet with white satin breeches and a plumed hat ; however, this evening I must put on my black evening coat for the dinner at the Élysée when I give my toast of welcome to my illustrious guest ; the evening is sweetened by a telegram from Paul Cambon to the effect that the British Government has definitely decided to have a naval agreement with Russia.

On Sunday, the 17th May, *déjeuner* at the Danish Legation, races at Longchamps, dinner at the Quai d'Orsay. The next morning, under a cloudless sky, a great review at Satary, where everybody and everything—including the dirigible *Montgolfier*—played their parts to perfection, or anyhow to the entire satisfaction of the King, who followed closely every movement and at the end got on his horse and galloped along the front line of troops. There was nothing more bellicose in the sham fight than in giving the subsequent breakfast at the Galerie des Batailles in order to entertain our guests where Versailles is at its best. A long drive all through the Park and a gala at the Opera complete the programme drawn up, and early the following day as he leaves Paris, King Christian reminds me that he and his Queen expect to see me at Copenhagen in July.

CHAPTER XVI

[During the electoral contest M. Poincaré's authority had lost nothing, and he had scrupulously kept to the part assigned to him by the Constitution above party conflict. On 24th May, when inaugurating the civic exhibition of Lyons, he delivered an impressive speech on the attributes and functions of the head of the French Republic, and at Rennes, at a meeting of the Federation of Gymnastic Societies, he had defended the law reviving the three years' term of service. The Chamber began its session on 1st June, and almost unanimously elected M. Deschanel as Provisional President. When M. Poincaré returned to Paris from Brittany, the Ministry had retired and M. Doumergue almost immediately tendered his resignation. M. Poincaré entrusted the formation of a Cabinet to M. Viviani, but on the latter failing to accomplish the task, M. Ribot agreed to attempt it—M. Deschanel, M. Delcassé and M. Dupuy having successively declined—and on 9th June a Government was formed which contained no Radical-Socialists. M. Ribot's term of office, however, extended for less than three days, defeat coming to him on an Order of the Day on 12th June. The day following M. Poincaré summoned M. Viviani, who, within twenty-four hours, was able to publish the names of his Cabinet. M. Viviani took the Presidency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; M. Bienvenu-Martin became Minister for Justice, while the Departments of War, Marine and the Colonies were entrusted to M. Messimy, M. Gauthier and M. Reynaud.]

The presence in our midst of royal guests had done nothing to stifle growing rumours as to our internal policy, and already I hear talk of a Ministerial reconstruction. The newspapers of the Right bid me bar the way to the advanced groups, and a Radical Senator, M. Bérard, replies in the *Lanterne* that he did not vote for me at Versailles but that he knows me to be a Republican who is scrupulous as to maintaining the Law and Constitution.

> "Some people", he writes, "ignore the first word of the Constitution of 1875. The President of the Republic is only the first servant of the Parliamentary Republic. . . . When he was elected M. Poincaré promised to be the faithful servant of the Constitution, and it is to do him gratuitous injustice to suppose that he could in any way violate either his word or his duty."

M. Bérard is right. But how heavy is the load which the Chief of the State has to bear when his duty is to cause other people's ideas to be observed and to abdicate his own personal opinions. Politicians, journalists and various advisers come to see me, hold me responsible for the elections, and reproach me more or less openly for having remained snugly at Eze instead of exercising supreme control over universal suffrage. I see that these people are disappointed, soured and rather irritated. Most of them urge me to take the first opportunity of forming a Delcassé Government. But M. Delcassé, who would not mind being President of the Republic or President of the Chamber, has always had very little taste for the Presidentship of the Council, nor, as a matter of fact, has Doumergue imparted to me any intention of retiring, and far be it from me to induce anything of the sort.

A three days' visit to Lyons forms a pleasant diversion, and I get a greeting the warmth of which is not unconnected with the kindliest of municipal notices which had been put out. At a banquet at the Hôtel de Ville I may remind the 600 guests of the cordial reception I had already enjoyed in the town when I came as a simple Senator to preside over the Educational Society. A reception at the Palais de Commerce, a visit to the School of Medicine, a visit to the University Students,—whom I can remind that in former years eloquence was so assiduously taught that bad orators were occasionally thrown into the Rhone,—a visit to the Hôtel-Dieu, where I am made heartily welcome by the Sisters of the Community (whose care for the sick cannot but excite the deepest admiration) as well as by Deputies and Senators who dropped their political differences in the presence of suffering and pain, a visit to the Hôtel de la Mutualité are some of the items in a packed programme drawn up for me. All too short was my inspection of the marvellous Musée de Tissus, where the display of silks, satins, velvets and taffetas would have scandalised Sully, who regarded the fabrication of silk stuffs not only as an excessive production of luxury but as a " meditative, leisurely and sedentary occupation ". Far from sharing the opinion of Henri IV.'s great economist, I boldly say at the breakfast offered me in the great hall of the Bourse : " However affected general business has been by events which have disturbed the East and troubled all Europe, your great industry has not only passed the crisis without loss of strength but has calmly gone on its way in the midst of universal disquiet. . . . Silk stuffs have justly recovered popular favour, and are no longer relegated to the ranks of superfluous luxuries. . . . Whatever sets-back your industry has experienced owing to the fickleness of fashion, you may well for the future pursue in all confidence the brilliant campaigns where you have already achieved so many victories." Such were the conquests which I coveted for France at the end of May 1914 ; if only other heads of Governments had the same peaceful aspirations !

A public dinner given by the Conseil Général of the Rhone, with M. Cazeneuve as chairman, furnishes me with an opportunity for defining my conception of the part assigned to me by the Constitution ; several members of the Government have joined us, and although these may agree with me, some of my hearers will think that I exaggerate, others that I attenuate, the powers reposed in me. " It is very pleasant for me to hear ", I can say, in reply to the toast of my health, " that, loyal to constitutional truths, you place the functions and the person of the President of the Republic outside the arena of parties. If, in the exercise of his magistracy, he cannot incur any parliamentary or political responsibility, it is because he must always be the President over all Frenchmen ; he must fulfil, with constant thought for great national interests, the part of arbiter and adviser which has been bestowed on him by the Republican Constitution. France, with her sad experience of personal power—an experience which she will never renew—intends to guide and control with her own sovereign authority, through her own appointed agents, the daily doings of responsible Cabinets. At the same time she desires that in the State every function, however high or low, shall be faithfully performed, and she expects of the President of the Republic, as of all other citizens, that he will wholly and resolutely discharge the duties which fall on him. As he must represent the nation as a whole, the President must raise himself above all individual interests, however legitimate, and must regard things only in the light of their general utility; he should discard whatever is merely contingent or ephemeral, and dwell on things of permanent necessity; he should strip away all purely incidental complexities from the different questions which present themselves, and study them exclusively from the French point of view. When it is given to him to visit so fine a Department as yours, his task is singularly easy; for here everything breathes the love of work for work's sake, and a patriotism which is as devout as it is well considered."

But my journey to Lyons had for its special object the International Fair which, despite many accidents attending its institution, presented a splendid show with its foreign as well as French exhibits, and where the Belgians received us with friendly warmth, the Italians with eager politeness, the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow with the utmost correctitude and courtesy, the Viennese Burgomaster with perfect good humour, and the German Committee with unaffected kindly attentions. To each and all I can express the fervent desire of France that their peaceful labours may be developed in tranquillity and crowned with success; all these friendly foreigners believe, as I do, that a European war, of which the Balkan war seemed for a moment to be a prologue, is henceforth to be dismissed from view.

After a dinner at the Prefecture which I give to the Senators and Deputies, the chief military officers and magistrates and other officials, a midnight train carries me and my colleagues and friends back to Paris.

In my absence the Press has continued to discuss, from various points of view, the Ministerial and Parliamentary situation, and as I expected, my speech has provoked some discordant notes. Frederic Clément writes in the *République Française* that I make my rights too cheap and that the fear of appearing to exercise personal power may lead me to abdicate my authority. On the other hand Clemenceau in the *Homme Libre* insinuates that Stephen Pichon—for whom he has no good word since Barthou chose him as Foreign Minister—and I—whom he never spares—have agreed to dispose of Doumergue and recall Briand. The truth is the reverse, as I am very keen that Doumergue should stay where he is, but at Lyons he confided to me that he has hesitated a good deal as to presenting himself before the new Parliament. Like Clemenceau, moreover, he is firmly convinced that it would be dangerous at this moment to reduce the term of military service, and he thinks the new majority not too well disposed to maintain it. He perhaps carries modesty a little too far in asking whether a Cabinet otherwise composed would not, in the struggle which lies before us, be more powerful than his own.

M. Messimy and M. Bérard, the Radical Deputies for Ain, now ask me to pay a visit to their Department in August, but everything has to be subordinate to my visit to Russia, and a telegram is just to hand from Paléologue to the effect that Sazonoff begs me to accept the invitation from King Gustave, as he hopes I may do something to brush away the misunderstandings between Russia and Sweden.

On the 25th May Briand comes to see me. He is now in his best form and takes a rosy outlook on things ; he thinks that everything will be quickly settled in the new Parliament, and he has already sounded opinion in the lobbies. He will take the earliest opportunity of speaking both as to the Three Years' Service and Electoral Reform, and he thinks it very desirable that the Doumergue Ministry should remain in office. My own opinion is that internal politics are still very shaky, and that external politics are likely to become the same. Rather serious news comes from Durazzo ; the insurgents have rushed the town, and the Albanian Government has resigned. The Malissores have refused to move against the assailants, and the Prince of Wied, who had little liking for the task imposed on him by a benevolent Europe, has embarked on an Italian warship and quitted the country with downcast eye and a disappointed consort.

One fire has been extinguished in the Balkans; is another about to be lit?

On the 28th May Caillaux is at the Élysée, apparently his old self again and prepared to reassert himself. He is open-mouthed anew about poor Calmette and, alluding to the *verts*, tells me that these came to the *Figaro* through a diplomatist, whom he names, who gave them to a journalist. He wants me again to give evidence that there was nothing in the deciphered telegrams which could affect his honour or his patriotism. I tell him that in 1912 I defended, in Parliament, his conduct of 1911, and that he is quite at liberty to quote my words, but that it might be a serious thing from an international point of view if the President of the Republic were called upon to explain publicly the deciphering of foreign telegrams. Caillaux gets a little beyond himself and loudly protests that if he does not get from the Government or myself the evidence he requires he will be obliged to publish the actual text of the German telegrams. Doumergue, when I tell him the next day of my conversation, repeats to me that he intends to resign before the constitution of the new Chamber. I entreat him to do nothing of the kind, anyhow not at present. But he is a little discouraged by the exigencies of his friends. It is with this uncertainty hanging over me that I start, 29th May, on an official trip to Brittany, and two days later at Rennes I hear that Doumergue has definitely resigned.

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16*th June*.—At a dinner at the Spanish Embassy I find Viviani much elated, and with only one misgiving; in his impromptu speech he had coined the word "to concrete". I console him with the reminder that Littré himself regretted the non-existence of the word, but it is amusing that after so signal a success, a political victor should be in any way depressed by so small a fly in the ointment.

17*th June*.—Viviani tells me that the Prince of Monaco wants to take Briand to the Kiel Regatta so as to introduce him to the Kaiser. Viviani is not enamoured with the idea, nor am I. Briand is not a member of the Government and cannot speak on its behalf, but he is an important political figure, in spite of his having just been numbered in a minority, and he might be thought to be putting himself in the place of the Ministry. Anyhow he would be in a false position, and might draw down on himself quite unjust comments or give rise to fantastic conjectures. Briand himself thinks it much better to stay away, and that it might be very awkward to go to Kiel without the Kaiser's express invitation. Any talk with the Kaiser could do no more good than the frequent talks which Jules Cambon has, so why should he, for an occasion, step into the Ambassador's shoes. Briand, therefore, offers his excuses with his sincere thanks to the Prince who is, anyhow, going himself and will presently witness a very strange scene on board the Imperial yacht.

18*th June.*—M. Abel Ferry, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, is sent by Viviani to report a regrettable incident in Morocco. Two German colonists have again encouraged desertions from the Foreign Legion, and General Lyautey—who day in, day out, sees evidence of the Karl Ficke machinations—wants to hold a court-martial; the General is sure that Germany is bent on hampering the work of the Protectorate which she officially recognised in 1911. Viviani hesitates as to a military tribunal, because he fears some diplomatic protest which might take a disagreeable shape, and also because Germany has already contested our right to hale her countrymen before the military authorities. To avoid anything which might acidulate our relations with Germany, Ferry will ask the General to do nothing without having sent us a full dossier, and without having received precise instructions from us; Jules Cambon should also be informed and should let it be known at the Wilhelmstrasse that if we take no action against the guilty parties it is on condition that they are turned out of Morocco, and that the matter should be reported to the Hague. Viviani quite rightly begins by asking the General for further information, and it transpires that one of the individuals is a naturalised Frenchman and can quite well be brought before the court-martial, whereas the other will be quietly propelled across the frontier, and we can thus give one more proof of French conciliatory spirit.

With the exception of this little fuss everything seems quiet, and I can make my autumn plans the while I take part in an unbroken succession of quasi-social events—banquets, bazaars, prize-givings, exhibitions of art, charitable entertainments and even racing fixtures.

On Sunday the 28th I had taken the chair at a Press luncheon before going with Madame Poincaré to Longchamps for the Grand Prix. A gorgeous afternoon, the stands and the lawns crowded, the Ministers and the Corps Diplomatique chatting in the Presidential "tribune", beautifully dressed women abounding everywhere, the course itself in perfect order, and everybody in the highest spirits—then, suddenly, a bolt from the blue, as a Havas telegram informs us that during a visit to Serajevo the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his morganatic wife, the Duchesse de Hohenberg, had been mortally wounded. There had been two attempts, the first by a Serbian workman, an Austrian subject, who had thrown a bomb, but had only injured some passers-by; the second by a student, one Prinzip, also an Austrian subject, who had fired repeatedly point-blank, wounding the Archduke in the head and the Duchesse in the stomach; they had been taken to Konak, where a few minutes later they died. Although the news was not official, I at once hand the telegram to Count Szecsen, who turns very pale, and asks if he might at once repair to his Embassy to await direct information from the Austrian Government. But the murder is now the one topic of conversation; some wonder what will happen to the Hapsburg Monarchy, while others murmur it will mean a revival of the Balkan troubles; M. Lahovary, the Roumanian Minister, seems wrapped in gloom and fears lest Austria should make the crime a pretext for launching a war. As soon as I return to the Élysée I hasten to telegraph to the venerable Emperor:

"It is with grief and indignation that I hear of the crime which has inflicted a new suffering on your Majesty, and which will place in mourning the Imperial Family and the whole of Austria-Hungary; I beg Your Majesty to believe in my most sincere sympathy."

To tell the truth I was not sure that the death of the nephew would so very grievously affect the uncle. I knew that their relations were rather strained, and that Francis Joseph had never forgiven the Archduke his marriage with Sophie Chotek. According to General Margutti,[1] the Emperor, on learning of the death of his heir, only said: "A higher Power has restored order which, unhappily, I myself have not been able to maintain". However, on the following morning I received from the Emperor a telegram in which he thanked me for my condolences in terms appropriate to a deeply afflicted individual.

Information dribbles in as to what happened at Serajevo and as to what is likely to ensue. Dumaine writes that Count Berchtold—who was an intimate friend from childhood of the Archduke—spoke of him as being greatly misjudged because he was difficult to get on with, inclined to be stubborn, and careless about making enemies, but that he was highly intelligent, and a prince who was likely to go far. He had been unjustly accused of harbouring a hostile policy to certain States, notably Russia, whereas, as a matter of fact, he was, if anything, favourably disposed to the neighbouring Empire.

"In this respect", Berchtold said, "he is following in the footsteps of his father, who, having been entrusted with several missions to Russia, had a very great regard for the Russian people and was a personal friend of the Czar. I am certain that had the Archduke Franz Ferdinand ruled, he would have shown Russophile tendencies." "But if he had lived", Dumaine went on, "his reign would have been viewed askance, whereas now he will be credited with the best attributes of governorship. All that comes within just surmise is that his quick and masterful temper might have determined him to upset existing things as well as the exterior policy of the monarchy, and one cannot say whether this would have been beneficial or not. He hated the

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[1] *Vom alten Kaiser.*

Hungarians and the Italians, whence he was believed to favour Slavism, and this to the detriment of the Magyars and of Italian penetration into the Austrian littoral of the Adriatic. Would he have been impelled by these tendencies either to institute trialism or to endow the different nationalities grouped under his sceptre with a sufficient degree of autonomy to satisfy the aspirations of each and the other? In Roumania he was regarded as likely to make for the betterment of the peoples of Transylvania, now Hungary-ridden. In Serbia opinion veered towards him because it was hoped that he would create a Jugo-Slav kingdom. But all this was to reckon without his pronounced ultramontanism which was sure to inspire in him as much dislike for the various schismatics as for the Italian despoilers of the Papal estates. Internally the Tzechs alone flattered themselves that he would help them, and this from the fact that he was much under the influence of his wife who sprang from one of the old Bohemian families. The Austrian people as a whole, without knowing very much about him, and inclined to believe the stories of his clerical fanaticism and avarice, did not like him. Anyhow, now that he is gone, one can weigh the chances of rather risky changes against the quasi-certainty of seeing the superannuated traditions, so dear to the old Emperor, prolonged under the reign of a young Sovereign who is devoid of personality. It looks as if senility will be succeeded by puerility. There is, anyhow, quite enough to trouble men who, in this atmosphere of heedlessness and thoughtlessness, are nervous as to what may in the immediate future threaten the cohesion of the monarchy."

Our Consul-General at Budapest wrote :

"The man whom the Hungarians denounced as their enemy and pronounced to be the friend of the Slavs, has perished at the hands of the Serbians ; Franz Ferdinand was no more liked by Serbs and Slavs in general than by the Hungarians. On the one hand, he was never forgiven for being the chief instigator of the Bosnian annexation ; on the other, the Serb and Slav Nationalists had good reason to mistrust his grand trialist projects. In satisfying certain claims, and in placing the Slav States within the framework of the Monarchy, these projects were pretty sure to separate perpetually the Serbs from the Hungarian kingdom, and perhaps one day or another to bring about the absolute annexation of Serbia to the Empire."

Generally speaking, all that our agents told us has been confirmed by what one has learnt later as to the causes and the circumstances of the assassination. It is certain that

Prinzip and Kabrinovitch were Austrian subjects; it is no less certain that Councillor Wiesner, who was instructed by the Ballplatz to institute an inquiry, wrote in his official report of the 13th July 1914 (*Pièces dip. . . . d'Autriche*, 1919):

> "The complicity of the Serbian Government as to the assassination and as to preparation and delivery of weapons, rests on no evidence, and cannot even be presumed; nay more, there is good reason for considering it impossible."

No doubt the two assassins had lived in Belgrade, and the bombs had the mark of the Serbian Arsenal. But Wiesner in the same report noted:

> "There is no proof that the weapons were taken from the Depot either at the time or for the purpose of the assassination, for the bombs might quite well have issued from the war munitions of the Komitadjis."

In his remarkable book on the immediate origins of the war, M. Pierre Renouvin has given a most impartial analysis of all that was published with regard to Serajevo. He admits that the assassins had confederates at Belgrade in certain military and police quarters, but he adds:

> "It is impossible to establish any complicity on the part of the Serbian Government. The society entitled 'Unity or Death' (of which the leader was condemned to death in 1917 for plotting against the Prince Regent of Serbia, and who seems to have had a hand in arranging the assassination) was on bad terms with the authorities, especially since the second Balkan War. It had just been the means of bringing about considerable difficulties with regard to the administration of new Serbian territories. In fact the society was responsible for a dangerous and powerful group in the army, which was outside the control of the civil power."

That was the only accusation which, after long and exhaustive research, it was possible to sustain against Serbia; nothing against the Government, nothing against the people themselves, only revolutionary relations between the Slavs of Austria-Hungary and some fanatics at Belgrade.

In an interesting article which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of the 7th October 1926 Count Sforza demonstrated very clearly that the chief responsibility for the crisis in 1914 rested with the militarists and aristocrats in Austria-Hungary, who had prepared for a war against Serbia in 1908, who would have been happy to go to war with Serbia in 1913 when they were only prevented by the opposition of the Italian Prime Minister, and who had already organised a *coup* against Serbia in the spring of 1914, a plan which the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand changed into one for a punitive expedition. Another Serbian Minister, M. Ljouba Yovanovitch,[1] has reminded us that General Hoetzendorf in his *Memoirs*[2] is not backward to say that the combined documents on the origin of the assassination give no proof on which to hang an accusation of complicity against official Serbia; and that M. Pfeffer, who was the chief magistrate in the inquiry on the Serajevo affair, wrote on 2nd August 1924 in the *Karlovatchki Glas*,

> "The dossier drawn up in the course of my inquiry proves irrefutably not only that Serbia officially had nothing to do with the assassination, but that the men who arranged it kept it dark from her."

Anyhow, the death of the Archduke, preceding as it did that of the old Emperor, not only opened the Balkan question but presented the whole Austrian problem. For some time past internal uneasiness in Austria was on the increase. Prince William of Wied's retreat from the throne of Albania was felt at Vienna as a wound to *amour propre* which amounted almost to humiliation. The Kaiser himself had thought good to get into touch again with Franz Ferdinand with regard to the Near East, and a rendezvous was arranged for the 12th June at the Archduke's favourite place, Konopischt in Bohemia. In his work *Ursachen und Ausbruch des Weltkrieges*, Herr Jagow has pleasantly suggested that this meeting was arranged in order that the Emperor and the Archduke might indulge their admiration for the rose garden, a pretty idyll a little upset by the report of M. de Tschirschky to the Chancellor which opened thus:

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[1] Interview by M. Albert Mousset, *Figaro*, 5th April 1925.

[2] *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, vol. iv. pp. 81-82.

> " Count Berchtold was invited to Konopischt by the Archduke Franz Ferdinand immediately after the departure of the Kaiser ; the Minister has told me to-day that the Archduke was entirely satisfied with His Majesty's visit, when they were able to discuss every possible question, and to agree entirely as to their views."

One wonders what were the topics of these mysterious conversations, but one knows that anyhow they were immediately followed by unexplained military measures. On the 27th June our Minister wrote from Belgrade :

> " For some days military developments have taken place on the Serbian frontier. A hundred thousand men have been assembled in Bosnia and Dalmatia and a cordon of gendarmerie has been drawn up on the banks of the Save and of the Danube from Orsova to Raca. The Semlin brigade has been reinforced with cavalry and artillery, and the railway from Semlin to Szabatka is under military protection."

That was not all. Between the 14th and 27th of June, before the Archduke started for Serajevo, the Ballplatz drafted an important Memorandum to show that the Balkan situation had become intolerable to Austria. After the revolution of the 9th November 1918, at a moment when Germany, almost as a whole, seemed to have her eyes opened to the truth, Carl Kautsky, the Secretary of State attached to the Foreign Office of the Reich, rightly remarked that one could not read into this Ballplatz document anything less than a plan, drawn up on diplomatic lines, for a preventive war against Russia. The authors of this Memo. were first at issue with Roumania, whose King, although of Hohenzollern stock, had just received the Czar at Constantza, and who was accused of trying, in spite of " friendly remonstrances ", to drift away from Austro-Hungarian policy. There was nothing to be hoped, they said, in the way of any favourable change, and they opined that Austria must henceforth give up, not only in respect of Roumania but also of Serbia and Russia, what they called the policy of the *attente tranquille.* It was a matter of bringing about an alliance between Bulgaria and Turkey, and fitting the two together against Serbia. The memorandum, in which the secret thoughts of Austria are so crudely exposed, has been suppressed by

German propaganda, but, nevertheless, it was most certainly drafted on the 24th June, and quite evidently in order to pave the way for the isolation and humiliation of Serbia. This significant document was just being sent off to Berlin when Franz Ferdinand met with his fate, and the Emperor hurried its despatch and covered it with an autograph letter to the Kaiser.

"The efforts of my Government will have henceforth for their object the isolation and diminution of Serbia. The first stage on this road will be to reinforce the authority of the present Bulgarian Government so that Bulgaria, whose true interests coincide with our own, will be protected against any return to Russophilism. When they know at Bucharest that the Triple Alliance has not given up the idea of drawing in Bulgaria, but would like Bulgaria to join up with Roumania and guarantee her territorial integrity, there will be a withdrawal from that dangerous path along which we have been propelled by friendliness for Serbia and by the *rapprochement* with Russia. If this succeeds, one could further try to reconcile Greece with Bulgaria and Turkey and there will thus be formed—under the auspices of the Triple Alliance—a new Balkanic League which would aim at arresting the Pan-Slavist tide and at ensuring the peace of our States. All this will only be possible if Serbia, who is actually the pivot of Pan-Slavist policy, is eliminated from the Balkans as a political factor."

The Memorandum concluded on the energetic note:

"Necessity compels the Monarchy to wrench from her adversary's hand the net which it was sought to throw over her head."

The death of Franz Ferdinand was therefore not the cause but only the occasion and the pretext of the *Straf Expedition* which Austria was already planning against Serbia. So on the very morrow of the tragedy Count Berchtold told the Chief of the Staff that the hour had come to settle the Serbian question. The Minister for Foreign Affairs at the same time announced to Count Tisza "his intention to profit by the Serajevo crime to settle accounts with Serbia".[1] Count Tisza was then in somewhat hesitating mood, not apparently from love of peace, for he wrote

[1] Conrad v. Hoetzendorf, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, Vienna, Rikola, 1924, vol. iv. p. 34.

himself: "It would be the least of my cares to find a suitable *casus belli*"; but he did not think it opportune to proceed immediately against Serbia because, fearing Russia might intervene, he wanted first to increase Austria's chances of success by securing the support of Bucharest and Sofia.[1] Without troubling his head about Tisza's advice, Berchtold on the evening of the 4th of July sent his Chef de Cabinet, Count Hoyos, to Berlin with the Memorandum and the Emperor's letter.

In Paris, of course, we knew nothing of this secret correspondence and the sinister design embedded in it. Public opinion was even further than the Government from harbouring any suspicion; Vienna, Budapest, Serajevo, were for most Frenchmen nothing but names, and the Ministers themselves had things nearer home to think about than the disappearance of an Archduke.

I get a little relief from politics—which just now are concerned much with the "Congregations"—by giving a dinner to the members of the various artistic societies, after which came a whole series of minor fêtes and ceremonies. On the 5th of July Count Hoyos arrived at Berlin; certainly no one at the Grand Prix Cycliste at Vincennes, over which I was presiding that day, knew anything of this nor suspected the catastrophe which was already threatening the world. Three days earlier the coffins containing the bodies of the Archduke and his wife had arrived at Vienna and been publicly exhibited by torchlight. M. Dumaine sends us a full account of the funeral ceremonies, and expresses his surprise that the Corps Diplomatique was not invited to any of them, and that the Kaiser did not put in an appearance. It would seem that His Imperial Majesty had at first announced his intention of paying this last tribute to his friend, but in order to give full *éclat* to his presence he wanted to bring with him all the officers of the Prussian regiments of which the late Archduke was Colonel. This would have fitted in badly with the very modest and colourless funeral programme which had been drawn up, etiquette not permitting the morganatic spouse of an Archduke to have any princely honours paid to her. The Army was not represented at the funeral of the Generalissimo, and also under pretext of nursing the health of the old Emperor, no invitations had been issued to foreign Sovereigns and their families; the Kaiser, informed that his proposal met with scant approval, changed his mind and gave out that he was detained at Potsdam by slight indisposition.

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[1] Report, Tisza to the Emperor, 1st July 1914. (*Pièces dip.*)

> " Franz Ferdinand d'Este ", Dumaine wrote, " remains, even in death, a source of anxiety and threat. The stroke to which he has succumbed has revived all the hatred against Serbia and even Russia, and with the excuse of avenging the murder, it will be a matter of reopening the whole Balkan question."

Already also, Germany, without knowing exactly the circumstances of the assassination, had taken sides with Austria, and on the 4th of July our Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin telegraphs:

> " The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday, and told the Russian Ambassador to-day, that he hoped Serbia would give satisfaction to whatever Austria might demand as to the prosecution of the accomplices in the Serajevo crime; he added that if Serbia did otherwise, she would have against her the opinion of the whole civilised world." (Yellow Book, 1914.)

M. Sazonoff, on the other hand, seemed inclined to protect Serbia against arbitrary proceedings, and gave a friendly warning to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg as to the irritation likely to be set up by the attacks in the Viennese Press against Serbia on account of a crime committed on Austrian territory by Austrian subjects; and as Count Czernin hinted that the Austrian Government might look for the instigators of the Serajevo incident on Serbian soil, M. Sazonoff reminded him:

> " No country has suffered more than Russia from assassinations planned on foreign soil. Have we ever done anything against any other country such as your newspapers threaten should be done against Serbia? Don't set out on this dangerous path." (Telegram from St. Petersburg, 6th July.)

On the 5th of July, Count Szecsen brings me the thanks of the Emperor Francis Joseph for the message of condolence which I had asked him to convey to His Majesty and the Imperial Family. In the course of the war a telegram was deciphered at the Quai d'Orsay in which the Count gave an entirely accurate account of our interview.

> " The President ", so ran the telegram, " assures me anew of his deep sympathy with the Emperor. When alluding to the hostility which is being manifested towards the Serbs, he reminded me that after the assassination of President Carnot, the Italians were very largely the object of French hatred. I answered that the Carnot crime had no relation to any anti-French feeling in Italy, while in Serbia everything possible had been said and done against our Monarchy. M. Poincaré wound up our conversation by saying he was sure the Serbian Government would fall in with our wishes as regards any judicial inquiry and the prosecution of accomplices in the crime as this was a duty which no State could shirk."

But what the Ambassador postulated to me in sober terms was shrilly voiced by his Government, and in Vienna everyone talked glibly of having it out with Serbia once and for all. M. Tschirschky, the German Ambassador to Austria, reported to the Wilhelmstrasse on 30th June :

> " Yesterday I heard quite serious people speak of settling Serbia's account finally ; I do all I can quite quietly—but equally seriously—to advise against the taking of any abrupt and drastic steps."

Here we have an Ambassador whose forte is his moderation, but the Kaiser will have none of it, and minutes on the report,[1] " Who authorised him to do this ? " (*i.e.* to talk with some affinity to reason).

> " It is no business of his. Austria can settle her own conduct for herself ; if later anything went wrong people would say that Germany had stopped her. I will thank Tschirschky to talk no more nonsense ; we want to finish up with the Serbs as soon as possible ; now or never."

Here is an Emperor, fretful, imperious and imperative, as his compatriot M. Ludwig has painted him in a book which, if neither quite accurate nor quite just, shows us the ravages pride can make in an autocratic brain.[2] To let

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[1] *Die deutschen Dokumente*, etc., No. 7.

[2] *William II.*

Austria do her worst, to encourage her in a brutal attack on Serbia, was the will—on the morrow of the crime—of the man whose slightest frown made the world tremble. Tschirschky's report, with its haughty annotation, reached the Foreign Office on the 4th July from the Kaiser's hands, and Herr Jagow could only obey.

On that 5th of July, while I was receiving Count Szecsen's thanks, long and mysterious interviews took place at Potsdam. Count Hoyos had arrived at Berlin with the Austrian Memorandum and a letter from the Emperor, which Count Szögyeni, the Austrian Ambassador to Germany, undertakes to hand personally to the Emperor ; he asks for an audience, and is invited to breakfast at Potsdam. His account of what then and there happened, which he wrote down the same evening, appears in the Austrian Red Book of 1919.[1] The Kaiser, having digested the letter and the Memorandum, declared that Austria could count on the whole-hearted support of Germany, and he thought there should be no delay in getting to work ; he added that Russia might certainly be hostile, but that he had been for a long time prepared for some such eventuality, and that Austria might take it for granted, even if war were declared between her and Russia, Germany would stand faithfully beside her ; Russia, moreover, was not ready to fight. (*Renouvin.*)

Is Count Szögyeni at all beside the truth when he gives us the Kaiser's exact language on the occasion ? Surely nobody would dare to suggest this. But if Professor Delbrück and other more or less pronounced champions of the Kaiser are to be believed, the Austrian Ambassador, a tired old man, misunderstood him. But there are the annotations and they are beyond the range of dispute. It is Wilhelm himself who lets us know how he thinks Serbia ought to be treated, and we know, therefore, how His Majesty was disposed when he received at Potsdam the Austrian Envoy.

The next morning Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, after having been sent for by the Kaiser, sees the Austrian Ambassador, and we gather what passed between them both from the Chancellor's telegram to M. de Tschirschky and by Szögyeni's report to his own Government.[1] Herr Hollweg announces himself ready both to let Bulgaria into the Triplice and to tighten the Austro-Roumanian alliance ; he equally promises that Germany, " agreeably with the terms of the alliance and her old friendship ", will stand beside Austria-Hungary in any action against Serbia ; Count Szögyeni is definite that the support promised by the Chancellor is unconditional and without reserve, and that Herr Hollweg has declared :

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[1] Diplomatic Documents, vol. i. p. 6.

> " As to Austria's relations with Serbia, the German Government simply says it is for Austria to do what she thinks right to adjust these ; however she makes up her mind, she can be absolutely certain that Germany will be alongside her both as an ally and as a friend."

The German Chancellor had written on the draft of his telegram to M. Tschirschky : " In all circumstances " ; but on his revise he struck out these words, and the telegram actually sent does not contain them. It is therefore probable that the version brought by Count Szögyeni was correct, but that after reflection the Chancellor preferred to soften down a little the official record. The Austrian Ambassador to Germany states that Herr Bethmann-Hollweg expressed the opinion that Austria must act and act quickly, and this phrase does not occur in the Chancellor's telegram. But it is confirmed by Count Hoyos, who was directly concerned with the negotiations of 5th and 6th July. " I consider it my duty ", he says, " to state that at Berlin both Count Szögyeni and I received the impression the German Government favoured our acting immediately against Serbia while fully aware that a world war might be the sequel." [2] (*Deutsch-englische Gegensatz*, Berlin, 1922.)

Other conversations took place at Potsdam and Berlin on these two memorable days, and well-known persons[1] have alluded to an Imperial Council, but the White Book makes light of these, and speaks of an informal breakfast party where mere suggestions were made as to the political situation, and that on the morrow the Kaiser, quite easy in his mind, embarked for a cruise in the North Sea. The White Book adds that no special decision was taken, as, in virtue of the alliance, it was impossible to refuse a backing to Austria in her demand for substantial guarantees from Serbia. The White Book also recognises that the possibility of Russia taking a hand was not blinked, but that there was no thought of a general war, and there could be no sort of question of provoking a European conflict.

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[1] German and Diplomatic Documents, vol. i. p. 27.

[2] M. Renouvin, whose book has been so strangely distorted by German and American Gallophobes, says that to read the document is to be sure that Count Szögyeni reported correctly. Berlin pronounced for immediate action and promised unconditional help. Hence the Bavarian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin could speak of the carte blanche given to Austria by Germany.

These soothing explanations are rather roughly traversed, among others by Prince Lichnowsky, who confirms in his *Memoirs* the instructions given to Szögyeni :

> " At the end of June I was ordered to wait on the Emperor at Kiel, and it was on board his yacht that I learnt of the death of the Archduke. His Majesty expressed regret that his efforts to win over the Archduke to his own ideas were thus defeated. I do not know if any plan of activities directed against Serbia had been drawn up at Konopischt. . . . At Berlin I saw the Imperial Chancellor and told him that I viewed our foreign situation as very satisfactory from the fact that we were on a much better footing with England than we had been for a long time, . . . in France a Government disposed to peace was in power. Herr Hollweg did not seem to share my optimism and complained of Russian armaments. . . . I was not, of course, told that the Chief of the Staff had plumped for war ; I learnt, however, that Herr von Tschirschky had been blamed for having advised Austria to show a little moderation to Serbia. On the 4th July I learnt that Austria had decided to go for Serbia so as to put an end to an intolerable state of things. Unhappily I did not attach sufficient importance to this bit of news. . . . I knew later that during the discussion at Potsdam on the 5th July, the question put by Vienna secured the unconditional assent of all the authorities with even the addition that no great harm would result from a war with

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[1] Baron Busshe, Foreign Under-Secretary, M. Morgenthau, American Ambassador to Turkey, etc.

Russia. This is anyhow what occurs in the Austrian report which Count Mensdorff received in London." [1]

The White Book,[2] published at the beginning of the war, when Germany thought she was sure to win, was not so cautious as German script has been since defeat, and there occurs the phrase:

> "We could tell our Ally from our hearts that we shared her point of view in assuring her that whatever action she thought necessary to take to put an end to the agitation in Serbia against the existence of the Monarchy would have our entire sympathy. We were quite aware that Austria's hostilities against Serbia might bring Russia on the field and involve ourselves in war in conformity with our obligations under our Alliance."

The Kaiser therefore knew quite well that in giving Austria her head, and, *a fortiori*, in urging her forward, he ran the risk of provoking general complications. He knew this so well that before embarking for the North Sea he thought it a good thing to confer with the General Staffs of the Army and Navy. Even if Chevalier von dem Bussche was mistaken when, in his note of the 30th August 1917,[3] he spoke of a conference dealing with preparations for war, it is anyhow a fact that on 6th July the Kaiser received the War Minister and the principal executive officers of the Army and Navy. This emerges quite clearly from the inquiry instituted by the Chancellery in October 1919 relative to Von dem Bussche's note, as also from Tirpitz.

On returning to the War Office General Bertrab spoke of the Conference to Count Waldersee, who has put on paper, "the Kaiser has told the General that he has promised the Emperor Francis Joseph to be behind him with all the might of Germany if complications ensue from the action which Austria is meditating against Serbia".

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[1] M. Bompard, formerly our Ambassador at Constantinople, told me that the German Ambassador returned from Berlin to Constantinople rather unexpectedly, and immediately said to the Marquis Garroni (Italian Ambassador) that it was a case of war, and that the decision had been made at a Council at Potsdam over which the Kaiser had presided before going to Norway. Nine years later M. Salandra told our Attaché at Rome that he had heard precisely the same story from Garroni.

[2] *Vide* also the works of E. Bourgois and G. Pagès.

[3] *Die deutsche Dokumente*, etc., Anhang, vol. viii.

According to Von Capelle and Zenker,[1] the Kaiser stated that he had promised help to Austria but did not believe in any Russian or French intervention as those countries were not ready. Falkenhayn writes to the Commission of 1919:[2]

> "The Kaiser summoned me to the New Palace in the afternoon of the 5th July—by telephone, if I remember right—and received me at once; there were present also Generals Von Plessen and Von Lyncker. His Majesty read me fragments of the well-known letter from Emperor Francis Joseph and of the Austrian Memorandum. The Kaiser pointed out what grave results might follow from the ostensibly firm resolution taken by Austria and ended by asking me if the Army was ready for every eventuality. According to my conviction I unreservedly and quite briefly said yes and only asked if any preparatory steps should be taken. His Majesty, equally briefly, said no and wished me good-bye."

Count Waldersee, sometime Chief of the Staff, wrote to the same Committee of Inquiry:

> "There was no need to give any order consequent on General Bertrab's visit to Potsdam. The mobilisation scheme had been completed on the 31st of March 1914 and the Army was, as always, ready."

It is useless, therefore, for a section of Republican Germany to throw a veil of modesty over Wilhelm's imprudences. He put his own spoke in the wheel on the 5th and 6th of July in saying "Let Austria go her own way, and whatever she does we will back her". Fatal words, which seemed like the secret but official signal of the approaching catastrophe.

In Paris we know nothing of these concealed doings in Vienna and our news from there is indeed rather comforting. On the 8th July Dumaine telegraphed that, like his Russian colleague, he thought the Austrian military party would not be able to force on Serbia an inquiry about the crime and that the influence of the old Emperor would prevent any display of threats; our Ambassador also said that if there had been lack of foresight and carelessness the Bosnian authorities were the chief culprits.

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[1] *Documents allemands*, preface, p. xix, and p. vi.

[2] Stenographic Reports, *Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, p. 62. *Cf.* Renouvin, pp. 24, 25, 26.

In London Paul Cambon was reassuring Sir Edward—who feared not an ultimatum but too highly coloured remonstrances—and was telling him that the Austrian Government did not seem inclined to render Serbia responsible for the death of the Archduke.

Neither Dumaine nor Paul Cambon nor any of us knew that on 7th July, after Count Hoyos' return, a Ministerial council had been held, on which the Red Book for 1919 throws some light. Count Berchtold had said that the moment had come to draw Serbia's teeth once and for all, and that Germany had unreservedly offered help.[1] He did not conceal that a war with Serbia might mean war with Russia, and the minutes drawn up by Count Hoyos at first ran, "It is evident that as a consequence of our entering into Serbia war with Russia will be very probable". Count Berchtold altered this phrase into, "It is evident that our entering into Serbia might have as a consequence war with Russia". But he concluded that it would be much better for a rupture to come at once as Russia was getting every day stronger in the Balkans. Any delay would be an admission of weakness which would rather disconcert the Allied Government. Count Tisza was more moderate in tone. He saw that a war with Serbia was possible, but was dead against war and recommended some preliminary diplomatic act instead of an abrupt and violent attack.

The Council, quite determined that there should be a fight, consented to begin by diplomacy but on the express condition that such diplomacy should consist of an ultimatum and that such ultimatum should be drawn up in the driest and most dictatorial terms. The first minutes ran, "Consequently Serbia must be presented with claims wholly inacceptable". This was corrected into, "Claims so drastic are likely to preface a refusal and will allow us to arrive at a final solution by means of a military intervention".

As Tisza still held out Berchtold said to him, "a diplomatic success will be of no use". On the 10th Berchtold said to the German Ambassador, " If Serbia should accept it will be very disagreeable and I am thinking over conditions to present such as would render her acceptance wholly improbable ".

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[1] *Pièces diplomatiques.*

While Vienna was thus contemplating vengeance, Paris, ignorant of the danger clouds which were hovering over Europe, was chiefly interested in the coming Assizes. As the date approached, Caillaux's friends became more and more heated, and the little weekly newspapers catered more and more with sensational titbits for their readers. Caillaux himself seemed to have lost something of self-control, and on the 10th of July he told Maurice Bernard that he had in his hands the written declaration of two witnesses who affirmed that Calmette often came to see me, during his campaign, at the Élysée. As soon as I heard this strange story, as I was determined that during my absence a part which I had never played should not be attributed to me, I wrote to Bienvenu-Martin :

> " M. Caillaux told M. Maurice Bernard yesterday that he had in his hands a statement made by two people to the effect that during M. Calmette's campaign I kept touch with him, and that I had inspired certain of his articles. M. Caillaux added that he would not make use of these statements for the moment. It is therefore possible that he will do so later on, and that during the trial, supposed witnesses will be produced who will repeat depositions made beforehand. M. Caillaux cannot but know that I was entirely a stranger to M. Calmette's campaign, and I cannot understand how he can give any credit to the statement which he says he has in hand. Anyhow, if during the trial and while I am away any witness should affirm that while M. Calmette was attacking M. Caillaux, I had any relation—direct or indirect—with the former, or that I favoured in any way his campaign, these witnesses will have lied, and, if they dare to adduce their falsehood in open court, I would beg you to institute proceedings against them at once on the charge of perjury."

In the evening I hear from M. Malvy that Caillaux has said to him, " I never thought of threatening the President or of being disagreeable to him. Maurice Bernard has misunderstood me. I am not going to make any use of the depositions which have come into my hands ; I did not ask for them, they were spontaneously brought to me. There is an individual who says that he saw Calmette's car near the Élysée." I can only tell the Minister of the Interior that the anonymous witness is either a liar or a person who has delusions.

While I am rather hung up with these unpleasant incidents the news from Vienna continues to be very uncomfortable, although there is no actual threat of an appeal to arms. On the 10th July Dumaine writes:

> "It will be thanks to the wisdom and foresight of the Emperor if violent movements are restrained and the danger inherent in a haughty summons to Serbia averted. The Ministers who have to decide what should be done will, if they are guided by their Sovereign, confine themselves—as much for the sake of the Bosnian régime as for the inquiry into the Serajevo crime—to far cooler propositions than what the fire-eaters are clamouring for."

So the secret was being well kept. While Dumaine was writing his despatch, Count Tschirschky was informing the German Government that the Emperor had told Count Berchtold that cut and dried conditions must be imposed on Serbia. The Kaiser, to whom the Ambassador reported this, wrote on the margin of the report: "Yes; cut and dried, categorical. The Austrians have had quite time enough for that." And when Wilhelm heard that Tisza was for more "gentlemanlike" methods than Berchtold, he scribbled "Milder measures for assassins! After what has happened nothing could be more stupid." One knows that Tisza did not hold out, for on the 11th July Count Szecsen had a telegram from Vienna which he carefully kept from the French Government.

> "Complete agreement with Germany as to the situation arising out of the Serajevo murder and all eventualities."

The same day Wilhelm, reading a telegram from Vienna, quoted Frederick II.:

> "I do not like Councils of War or deliberations, because it is always the timid opinion which prevails."

The Kaiser thought the Austrian policy was as timid as it was languid; Tschirschky, after his wigging, was content not to use the word prudent again, and knew, moreover, what would be the essential point of the forthcoming ultimatum. In Paris we suspect nothing of all this; the Austrian Sphinx is impenetrable. In all this mystery I could not give up my journey to the North of Europe, for which everything had been arranged; moreover, a sudden change of plan might have suggested some impending danger and might have scared Europe.[1]

On the 13th of July comes the Prince of Monaco to the Élysée to tell me of his last trip to Kiel; he hands me a note which he has drafted and entitled: "Reflections on Visits to Kiel for the last Sixteen Years". Prince Albert would like me some day to meet the Kaiser in the Canal and there establish with him a European entente. But he says the authority of the President of the great American Republic must vest in the President of the French Republic in order to give him, with all the prestige of national confidence, that weight which will ensure for the French Government rock stability in the confidence of other nations. I do not let His Serene Highness run away with any illusions as to the possibility of such a constitutional change materialising in France. As to Germany, he explained, "with her inflexible will and her growing strength she is superlatively governed". To the Kaiser he gives great credit for his devotion to works of culture and for his tenacity as to preserving peace. On this last point the Prince will soon have to change his opinion, and before long he will speak to me of Wilhelm II. in quite another key. Already a rather unfortunate impression has been stamped on him at Kiel. He was on board the Imperial yacht when a despatch-boat steamed alongside at full speed and delivered on deck a note for the Emperor. It was a telegram announcing the double murder at Serajevo. The Kaiser rapidly cast his eye over the paper which was given to him, and turning to the Prince exclaimed: "Everything that I have done has to be begun over again." What had he done with the Archduke and what was he proposing to do afresh ?

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[1] The insinuation of the Kaiser in his Memoirs that the object of the journey was to concert war plans scarcely needs contradiction; every detail of it had been worked out in June.

While, on 14th July, France was peacefully celebrating her national fête, large decisions were made at Vienna, although our Ambassador had no inkling of them. Tisza had submitted to the Emperor his objections to anything like precipitate action, only to be told by Berchtold of the military difficulties inherent in delay, and that " in Germany no one would understand Austria allowing such an occasion to pass without making herself felt ; if we compound with Serbia, we should be charged with weakness, which would have a bad effect on ourselves as regards the Triple Alliance and on German policy in the future ". Talked to thus, Tisza finished by being talked over : an agreement was arrived at as to the inexorable terms to be inserted in the ultimatum, and on the 14th July Berchtold could rapturously report, " The contents of the Note are such that we may consider a call to arms as likely ". The same day Tschirschky telegraphed to Berlin :

> " Count Tisza has been to see me after his interview with Count Berchtold. He told me that he had advocated prudence, but that each succeeding day had hardened his opinion that the Monarchy must be up and doing. [' Certainly,' was Wilhelm's marginal note.] Count Tisza adds that the position of backer, which Germany has taken up, has done much to influence the Austrian Emperor's firm attitude." (*Pièces dip.*)

So if Germany had wanted to hold Austria back, she could have done so ; nay more, if only she had not egged her on, Franz Joseph and Tisza would have had a fair chance of easing things a little. Tschirschky went on to say that as regards the date of handing the Note to Serbia, it would be better to await the date of Poincaré leaving Russia, *i.e.* the 25th. Wilhelm, feverishly anxious, minutes on this proposal, " What a pity ". On this same day the German Emperor addresses winged words to the Emperor of Austria :

> " Your [1] estimable and experienced Ambassador will have conveyed to you my assurances that at the supreme moment you will find me faithful by your side, myself and my empire ;

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[1] The " Du " is used.

this could not be otherwise in view of our friendship, which has stood the test of time and of our mutual duty to one another as allies. It is a joy and a privilege to repeat this to you in this letter. The horrible outrage at Serajevo has flooded with light the mischievous manœuvres of crack-brained fanatics and the Pan-Slavist plots which threaten the fabric of the State. I must not interfere with the question at issue between your Government and Serbia. But it is not only the moral duty of all civilised countries, but it is also necessary for their salvation, that we should vigorously oppose the propaganda, the object of which is to break the cohesion of monarchies. I do not shut my eyes to the serious threat to your State, which is a threat to the Triple Alliance—witness the unrest of the Pan-Slav Russians and Serbs, and I quite see the necessity of freeing the frontiers of your Empire from this heavy pressure."

Owing to a delay in Parliament my departure for Russia is retarded by a day and M. Viviani and I arrive at Dunkirk before 5 A.M. on the 16th July and immediately embark on board the battleship *France*, the *Jean Bart* being detailed as her companion. We have been looking forward to something like quiet and rest on our voyage, but while we are enjoying it, strange intrigues are being woven at Berlin and Vienna, without our suspecting anything of the sort. The Bavarian Chargé at Berlin reported (18th July) to Munich how, through official sources, he had learnt that Austria had decided to present an ultimatum to Serbia on the 25th ; this step had been postponed, he further stated, until after the departure of M. Poincaré and M. Viviani from St. Petersburg, so as not to facilitate any agreement between Russia and France in view of an eventual counter-stroke.

" Until now ", he proceeded, " an appearance of a peaceful trend has been given there by allowing the War Minister and the Chief of the Staff to go on leave at the same time, and this sense of quiet is reflected in the Press and on the Bourse. Herr Zimmermann tells me that the Note will insist (1) on a pronouncement by the King of Serbia that his Government is wholly foreign to, and wholly disapproves of, Pan-Slavist unrest ; (2) a Court of Inquiry—of which an Austrian is to be a member—regarding the accomplices in the crime ; (3) the prosecution of all who have taken part in the Pan-Serbian movement. Forty-eight hours will be allowed for the reply; Serbia evidently cannot accept such terms, which are incompatible with the dignity of an independent State, and the result will be war. In Berlin it is admitted that Austria is grasping at an opportunity at the risk of future complications, but neither Jagow nor Zimmermann are quite sure if Vienna will come to the scratch. The Under-Secretary of State says that Austria-Hungary—thanks to her indecision and inconsistency—*is* now, what Turkey *was*, the sick man of Europe, and as such, Russia, Italy, Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro are biding their time to cut her up. The opinion here is that it is a question of Austria's decisive moment and to stimulate her action a message has been sent (in reply to a query) that Germany endorses whatever decision Austria may take even if it entails war with Russia. The carte blanche is such that the Austro-Hungarian Government has been authorised to negotiate with Bulgaria for her entry into the Triple Alliance. Vienna apparently did not expect to receive quite such unconditional support, and Zimmermann thinks the usually rather timid Austrian authorities are a little sorry that Germany did not suggest something in the way of prudence and moderation. Berlin would have preferred less delay in the Austrian Note to Serbia so that the Serbian Government should not have time to offer—under strong Franco-Russian advice—satisfaction of its own accord. To localise any war the Imperial Government, as soon as the Austrian overtures have been made to Belgrade, will make diplomatic representations to the Great Powers. In airing the fact that the Kaiser is cruising in the North, and that the War Minister and Chief of the Staff are on leave, Germany will affect to be as surprised as the other Powers at Austria's move. She will stress the general advantage of destroying the nest of Anarchists at Belgrade, and she will urge that the relations of Austria and Serbia are their own business."

The letter covered many pages, and the whole went to prove that the German Government, while hoping to localise the war, was quite aware that this might not happen and—even before the despatch of the ultimatum—was quite alive to the possibility of a general conflagration. This information was confirmed by a letter from Herr Jagow to Prince Lichnowsky: "18th July—Austria wants to square accounts with Serbia and has told us so . . . we should not and we cannot stop her. . . . If the conflict is not restricted in its area, then it must be war, but we cannot sacrifice Austria."

The 19th of July was a perfect day overhead, and while we were gliding over a sea like a mill-pond, and putting our watches on, there was being held a decisive conference at Vienna. Tisza had finally succumbed to Berchtold, and Count Hoyos could tell the German Embassy that the terms of the ultimatum were such that no State could accept them and still retain a shred of pride or dignity; nor did he disguise that if things should look like taking a peaceful turn, Berchtold, to ensure an appeal to the sword, would be heavy handed in the matter of carrying out the conditions imposed.[1] Germany thus duly informed, Austria delivers her ultimatum and sketches a political programme which Berchtold labels as provisionary and subject to revision.[2] Austria-Hungary would disclaim any present annexation of Serbian territory, because the Magyars do not want to reduce their influence in the Dual Monarchy by the introduction of new Serbian subjects. But annexation might later take place if Russia were to absorb in any sort Bulgaria. But the Serbian Monarchy is to be crushed and dislocated and made "dependent on Austria," a military convention is to be signed and the dynasty altered; bits of Serbia would be distributed among Bulgaria, Greece, Albania and if necessary Roumania. Thus, the Powers were to be told that Austro-Hungary is not out for conquest or annexation but for rectification of strategic frontiers, with a shrinkage of Serbia for the benefit of other States; and, *à la rigueur*, temporary occupation of Serbian territory was not excluded from the terms set out. Here was the bill of fare drawn up behind our backs by the Hapsburg Empire, spurred on its course by the great ally who thought things were not going quick enough. On the same day from the Norwegian coast comes an order that the fleet is to be concentrated until after the 25th, *i.e.* till after the tender of the Austrian ultimatum.[3] At Berlin the Serbian Chargé d'Affaires tells Jagow that the Serbian Government, sensible of a threatened Austrian intervention, promises to prosecute any Serbian concerned in the Serajevo crime and to oppose energetically anything likely to trouble a neighbouring monarchy ; only it would not accept terms incompatible with its independence and dignity. What is Jagow's reply ? He shows the Chargé d'Affaires the door, he rejects the one stipulation, he seals with approval Austrian " energy " and draws tighter Germany's bonds with her Ally.

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[1] *Documents allemands*, 87, private letter from Stolberg to Jagow.

[2] *Pièces diplomatiques*, t. i. No. 26, p. 22 *et. seq.* Jordan's translation. (French edition.)

[3] *Die deutschen Dokumente*, Nos. 101 and 91.

On the afternoon of the 20th we drop anchor at Cronstadt ; Admiral Gregorovitch, who is also Minister of Marine, comes on board at once and escorts me to the Imperial yacht, where the Czar, in full naval uniform and wearing our Cordon Rouge, is awaiting me with Isvolsky, Paléologue and old Count Friedrichs. The Emperor in faultless French tells me how happy a recollection he has of my last visit, and in reminding me of his earlier reception of Faure, Loubet and Fallières, is evidently endeavouring to appreciate our democratic régime, and certainly places in the forefront the loyalty with which our alliance is maintained. It is just three o'clock when we reach the quay of Peterhof, where a posse of Grand Dukes of Russia is assembled to greet us. Seated by the Emperor's side I drive to the Palace, which again appears to me a rather *fadé* replica of Versailles, with its vast park, carefully raked alleys, fountains, miniature canals and cascades. The guard drawn up in the square and upper gardens gives a salute and the Czar takes me to my apartments—my bedroom, furnished in the old Russian style, heavily gilt and lined with white satin, being somewhat of a piece with the over-decorated galleries and the great saloons, the gorgeousness of which seems rather to run riot.

A few minutes to rest and I am received by the Empress, who has come from the secluded Villa Alexandria to the Palace with her two elder daughters, the Grand Duchesses Olga and Tatiana. The Czaritza seems in better health than in 1912, and quite easy in her manners ; neither she nor the Czar remain standing upright and keeping me on my feet as on my first visit. The conversation at first touches on mere generalities, and then the Emperor speaks of my coming visit to Stockholm, which he hopes may do much to clear away some misunderstandings between Sweden and Russia. He had received King Gustave in Finland two years ago, and had no doubt as to his personal goodwill, but the Swedish Government wanted armaments which were quite unjustifiable, as it looked as if Sweden were threatened by Russia, or else had some latent idea of eventually taking sides against her, which would suit Germany's book. I reply that I will, of course, willingly certify to Russia's perfectly peaceful propensities, but Sweden had grievances about Russian espionage: the Czar has heard of these charges; he does not believe them to be true. Meantime Sazonoff and Viviani have an hour's chat, the Russian Minister not appearing to be anxious as yet as to the consequences of the Serajevo murder.

When M. Viviani has finished his talk I make a round of customary visits to the Grand Dukes; I am accompanied by a large cortège, including a Russian general; the residences of the exalted personages are rather scattered, but none of them are at home except the Grand Duchess Vladimir and her sons.

In the evening a gala dinner in the great Peter I. hall, lighted by a dozen gorgeous crystal candelabra, the wax candles being infinitely more becoming than the electric light, which has not yet been installed. The President's room at the Élysée boasted nothing but oil-lamps when I became President; this was perhaps out of regard to the function of the lampist. My place is on the right of the Empress, who in the course of the dinner has great difficulty in disguising the pain from which she is evidently suffering. She speaks of her health, and of the heart attacks and the sensation of suffocation which so often compel her to cancel her arrangements, and she alludes wistfully to the happy days she spent at Houlgat long before there was any question of her becoming an Empress. On my right is the Grand Duchess Vladimir, evidently in high favour again at Court, and anxious to talk to me about everything and everybody in Paris, more especially our men of letters and artists.

Our Ambassador has little news to give us that evening; it would seem that just when polemics against Serbia were weakening at Buda-Pesth, the sudden death of M. de Hartwig at Belgrade stirred them up again. The Hungarian Cabinet was quick to try and quiet things down, and optimism as to future tranquillity was the official *mot d'ordre.* On the other hand, if the Austro-Hungarian Government had not already sent a threatening Note to Belgrade, it was certainly not the fault of an inflamed Press which—the *Zeit* alone excepted—was on the alarmist tack, with the result that the Bourse was in something like a state of panic, and gilt-edged securities were tumbling in price.[1]

The Ballplatz did not let M. Dumaine know that on this 20th of July Berchtold submitted the terms of an ultimatum to his Imperial master at Ischl. The Emperor assented to these the next day, but without waiting for this formality the Director of Politics had sent an official copy of the Note to the Austrian Minister at Belgrade, covering it with an order not to present it to the Serbian Government until the afternoon of the 23rd—the delay imposed being due to the desire that Viviani and I should know nothing about this Note until after we had left Russia. No one at St. Petersburg had wind of these preliminaries; no one knew that the Kaiser had on the same day ordered the fleet to remain concentrated till the 25th and had instructed Bethmann-Hollweg to let the Director of the Maritime Navigation Company know what was likely to happen. And of course no one knew that the Crown Prince had hastened to congratulate the author of a Pan-Germanist pamphlet, and that Hollweg had written both to the Prince to expostulate with him, and to the Kaiser asking him to intervene.

> "I have reason to fear", so ran the Minister's letter, "that His Imperial Highness, when the ultimatum is made known, may indulge in manifestations which will be considered by our adversaries as an incitement to war."

All we did know was that the Caillaux trial had begun and that Paris was much excited by it.

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[1] The newspapers insinuated that the military impotence of France should be a warning to Russia, that France no longer counted for anything in international politics, and that Russia was isolated and would do well not to espouse rashly the cause of Serbia if that country were threatened.

Tuesday, 21st July.—When the Czar took me back to my rooms last night, he asked if I would receive him this morning, and at 10 o'clock he was with me. He began by thanking me for my visit and told me how pleased he and the Empress would be to return it next summer. He promised this unconditionally for himself, and only hoped that the Empress's health would enable her to accompany him ; not a word as to any possible war nor a suggestion of any sort of danger. He told me at length about the difficulties between England and Russia. Our information from England was that several Russian Consuls in Persia had broken the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, and had behaved themselves as if they were in a conquered country. The Czar told me frankly that England was perfectly justified in her complaints, and he assured me that there would be no recurrence of what were very regrettable incidents. As regards the trans-Persian railway, as to which the Bear and the Whale had disputed so keenly, an agreement has been reached with respect to the most important points of the scheme. There remained the irritating question of the debouchment on to the Persian Gulf. "This", the Czar said, "will settle itself later on ; there is really no hurry about it. *The* thing is that no problem should present itself which might jeopardise good relations between England and Russia, and this I am as keen about as you are. But there it is! We have sometimes, within and without, agents who are so busy looking at what is going on under their noses that they forget the larger interests. As to the naval agreement with Great Britain, I have just been writing to King George and have begged him to speed things up ; I am very grateful to the French Government for what it has done in the matter." Apropos, I spoke to the Emperor about an indiscretion which had been committed, according to Germany, at the Russian Embassy in Paris at the same time as at the Ministry of the Pont aux Chantres. He knew of Germany's accusation, but wasn't sure if the Cabinet in Berlin had not made it so as to know the truth. In any case, he was very glad Sir Edward Grey had not allowed himself to be upset by this affair. The Emperor next turned to Albania, and spoke rather sharply of the inexperience of the Prince of Wied, while he applauded Greece for resisting Turkish pretensions as to Chios and Mitylene. He was a little nervous about the story of an Italian mobilisation, and asked himself what on earth Rome wants in the Balkans. He does not think that the alleged threats of strikes on the railways are sufficient to explain so many movements of troops, especially round Brindisi. But of course his chief anxiety is Austria; what is she up to? The Czar is both ignorant and unhappy about it, but no word passes his lips which suggests any real disquiet, not a word that would lead one to suppose that he believes in the imminence of a European conflict. He only says that at the present moment the closest agreement between our two Governments is more necessary than ever. With Turkey, except as to the handing over of Chios and Mitylene, he is on friendly terms and hopes that no further misunderstandings will occur. He says nothing about the Narrows, and I am careful not to stir up a question as to which France means to stick to the policy of *status quo*. He complains bitterly of Bulgaria and King Ferdinand, who have just rushed through the Sobranie a vote to float a loan with the German banks. The Czar flits through all these subjects without emphasising anything particularly; he just tosses the ideas about without enlarging on them. An hour's talk, and he goes back to his villa.

Félix Faure regretted when he was here that he could not don a gold-broidered costume, but could only appear as the shadow of his Amassador. I slip on my black evening coat and drive to the quay, where is anchored the Imperial yacht which is to take us up to St. Petersburg. The Czar does not accompany me; does he fear or does he disdain a crowd? He does not tell me and I cannot ask him, but it seems odd he should stay away from the capital when he has a State visitor; I cannot see myself receiving a crowned head at Versailles and letting him go alone to Paris.

On landing, Count Tolstoi, Mayor of St. Petersburg, offers me bread and salt on a silver dish, which he asks

| (and) just what did they agree ?

me to accept as a souvenir of my visit. An inspection of the guard of honour, a drive along a lane of cheering crowds, a visit to the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, a reception of the French Colony at our Embassy, and then to the Winter Palace, where the Chefs de Mission are awaiting me. The doyen is the German Ambassador, the Count de Pourtalès, an agreeable person with a pretty knack for evasive phrases and well-turned compliments. We only speak of his French family and his approaching visit to Castellane ; he really intends to come to France this summer, and so far there is nothing to prevent it. The British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan, exquisitely courteous if a little cold, does not conceal his anxieties. He is very anxious that the Persian question between England and Russia should be settled, and thinks it is only a matter of modifying the treaty of 1907. He is very pleased with the assurance which the Emperor has just given me on the subject, but is nervous as to fresh troubles in the Balkans, and cannot make out what Austria is up to as regards Serbia. He has gathered from a few words which he exchanged with the Serbian Minister that some violent Austrian Note may be sent to Belgrade, and both he and Sir Edward Grey favour the idea of some direct communication between Vienna and St. Petersburg. I tell him that just now I think this might be rather risky, and it would be better if a timely word were said in a friendly spirit to Austria by France and England. My little talk with Sir George somewhat depresses me, my subsequent conversation with the Austrian Ambassador does little to raise my spirits. Count Szapary is a fine type of Magyar nobleman, a little like Count Szecsen, but never a smile on his face. He gives me to understand that his Government has by no means said the last word about Serajevo, that Austria holds Serbia responsible for the murder of the Archduke, and that she intends to say or do something at Belgrade ; exactly what this will be, one cannot guess, but I feel it will be very unpleasant. I show a little discreet surprise, and ask the Ambassador whether, contrary to earlier information, an inquiry had disclosed that the

Serbian Government itself was mixed up in the matter, a question which he avoids answering. His evident embarrassment makes me more anxious, for it looks as if Austria wants to saddle Serbia with all the responsibility of a crime committed on Austrian territory, and will try and humble her little neighbour to the dust. I feel that if I say nothing, Count Szapary might believe that France would not disapprove some drastic action, and hoping to forestall an irreparable act, pregnant with consequences, I suggest to the Ambassador that Serbia has in Russia friends who would be startled to see her exposed to cruel treatment, and that this surprise might be shared in other European countries; there would then be a risk of a renewal of the Balkan crisis and of a renaissance of ugly complications. I tell the Ambassador how much one hopes that Serbia will aid and abet Austria in discovering and punishing the culprits, and I remind him of the European co-operation which has marked preceding years. In suggesting to Count Szapary the possible consequences of some *coup de main*, I dared to think that a courteous warning of this sort might give cause for reflection by the Dual Monarchy. The Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Carlotti, had a few days earlier warned M. Sazonoff not to let the Austrian Government take some irrevocable decision without putting them on their guard.[1] Of course, I did not know that the text of the ultimatum had already been drafted; it would seem that Count Szapary has pretended to detect something of threat in the quiet words which I address to him. But anyhow his account of our conversation had no influence on Austria's already determined mind. The Marquis Carlotti, who is as clever as M. Tittoni[2] assures me that if Italy mobilises, it is only to prevent threatened railway strikes, and as regards Serbia, one must wait to see what Austria would really do, but that his Government had neither been consulted nor informed on the subject. Then a few pleasant words with the Count de Cartagène, the Spanish Ambassador, a close friend of King Alfonso, and with the Japanese Ambassador, Baron Motono, who very much covets an official quadruple entente between France, Russia, England and Japan. Then, during a tour of the Corps Diplomatique in the great hall of the Palace, I ask M. Spalaïkovitch, the Serbian Minister, what news from Belgrade. "Very bad indeed," he replies quickly. I could only hope that things would improve, and say that France would do all she could to avoid any clash of arms. M. Spalaïkovitch has only too good reason not to be very cheerful; his father-in-law lives at Serajevo, and has had his house sacked by the Austrians after the assassination. I had just finished receiving some Russian delegations when a telegram from Paris was put into my hands to the effect that Germany will actually associate herself with the harsh *démarche* which Austria is going to make. Both Viviani and I think this may be a bluff calculated to humiliate Serbia, but it is very trying to one's nerves to be as completely in the dark as we are.

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[1] Schilling's *Diary*.

[2] Italian Ambassador in Paris.

A long visit to the French Hospital only just allows me time to be ready for a dinner which I give at the French Embassy to the Russian Ministers and important Generals, Admirals and Civil Servants. On my right is the new Prime Minister, M. Goremykine, a very pale successor to Kokovtzoff; he is an agreeable old gentleman, who seems very friendly to France, where he has spent a great deal of his time, but I scarcely think he will cut much ice. On my left is Sazonoff, more anxious than he was yesterday, but the very reverse of warlike, who tells me that if the worst comes to the worst, Russia would find it very difficult to mobilise, as all the country people are at work for the harvest. By special request of Count Tolstoi, and by special permission of the Emperor, I next pay a visit to the Municipal Duma, where choir and instrumentalists in national costume play and sing some old Russian airs and give a very hearty rendering of the "Marseillaise" in French—probably the first time our National Anthem has ever been publicly voiced in Russia. So kind and friendly was everybody that one could not help feeling, rather sadly, what immense pleasure the Czar could give if he would only come about among his people, who know nothing of him except his photograph, and whom his entourage allow him to ignore.

In the evening Sazonoff telegraphed to the Russian Ambassador in Vienna:

> "Rumour has it here that Austria is going to make various claims at Belgrade in respect of the Serajevo incident. Please tell the Foreign Minister, very courteously but very firmly, how dangerous it will be if Austria asks for anything which is incompatible with Serbia's dignity. In conversation with the French Foreign Minister, I gather that France also is very much concerned, and has no idea of allowing Serbia to be unjustifiably humiliated; your French colleague has been instructed to advise the Austrian Government to go easy; as far as we can learn London also is dead against Austria creating any European complications, and the English Ambassador has been told to represent this. I am not without hope that reason will prevail at Vienna, and that the timely warnings of the great Powers will serve to keep Austria from taking a step from which there will be no going back. Before talking to Count Berchtold on this subject, please see your French and English colleagues; to avoid any aggravation of the question be careful that your representations are kept wholly separate." (Schilling's *Diary*.)

22nd July.—At eleven o'clock in the morning I leave Peterhof accompanied by the Emperor's aide-de-camp, General Pantelief, an officer who is the type rather of a courtier than a soldier, and who takes me to the Imperial Villa Alexandria. This is a modest brick cottage, composed of two little buildings joined by a bridge and situated in a fine park, where the Empress Anne used to indulge in sport. Up a very narrow staircase I come to the first floor, which has a very bourgeois look, and, crossing a very small dining-room, I am ushered into a boudoir, where I find the Empress in a white morning dress with her four daughters and one son.[1]

The young Grand Duchesses, all dressed alike in white, look as healthy as they seem happy. The two elder, Olga Nicolaïevna and Tatiana Nicolaïevna, without being exactly pretty, are full of charm and all the freshness of youth. They

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[1] Vide *Le Tragique Destin de Nicolas II*, by Pierre Gilliard, formerly French tutor to the Czarewitch, for details as to the Russian Imperial Family.

| The French blank cheque to Russia

have fair hair with a warm tinge in it, and very fine skins just browned by sun and sea air. Olga's French is extraordinarily good and her eyes sparkle with intelligence, Tatiana, a little less lively, seems quite aware that a slight shyness adds to her charm, Marie Nicolaïevna is a very handsome girl with grey eyes and pink cheeks, while as to Anastasie, my first impression was quite amiss ; she seemed to me less frank and less *souriante* than her elder sisters, and I thought to detect signs of something like sulkiness. I made a very great mistake ; this young girl, I am assured, and I discovered myself later, is as gay as her sisters, and even a little roguish. They are, anyhow, absolutely delightful in their perfect simplicity, these four sisters, always near their mother, living in a modest villa which has no savour of an Imperial Court. The Grand Duke Alexis Nicolaïevitch, who is ten years old, is a pale and rather shy child ; he does not actually look ill, but his health causes his parents perpetual anxiety.

The Empress begs me to take a low arm-chair facing her, and explains to me that the Emperor is at the moment receiving a deputation of Roumanian officers. So for a few minutes I am alone with the mother and her children ; nothing could be more peaceful, more domestic, more intimate than this delightful interior of which I catch a glimpse. Is this really this Princess of Hesse, this Empress Alexandra Feodorowna as to whom rumour runs apace, with the tacit complicity of the Grand Dukes ? What I hear in Russia confirms what was told me in Paris by the Count de Gontaut Biron. An illiterate Russian peasant, a married man and father of a family, has wormed his way into the inner circumstances of the Imperial family. This Grigory Rasputin is an adventurer, or a visionary, who seems to have an extraordinary power of proselytism, and exercises an extraordinary influence over the great ladies within and without the Court. Some of them are quite mad about him and openly secure his sanctimonious caresses. He makes no concealment of his debauched and scandalous life, yet at the Holy Synod itself he has as many friends as foes, and many people believe he actually has a divine mission. He has obtained a quite extraordinary ascendancy over the Empress. When Stolypin tried to get rid of him Rasputin prophesied: "This man wanted to do me harm; a bad look out for him, and I foresee that he will be the victim of his own mistake"; sure enough, Stolypin was assassinated. It seems that the Minister had got hold of and communicated to the Emperor a letter in which the Empress said, in mystic phrase, to Rasputin: "I rest nowhere but upon your heart". Then Kokovtzoff in his turn tried to break down this sinister influence, but himself got broken in the process. Paléologue tells me that he derived these details from the Grand Duke Nicholas Michael and the Grand Duchess Vladimir. He does not believe the Empress to be guilty of any infidelity; she loves her husband and is beloved by him; she is an excellent mother, with a strong sense of duty and very careful about her dignity. But neuropathic, suffering from a displacement of her womb, constantly irritated by heart trouble, she has found in this coarse adventurer a sort of secret sympathiser, and apparently has long and mysterious interviews with him. He so completely dominates her that every evening in her presence, under pretext of exorcising the young Grand Duchesses, he slips his hands for some moments under their bedclothes. Neither the Empress nor her daughters have any doubt as to the irreproachable purity of this benison. A fortnight ago Rasputin was attacked by a woman, who stabbed him with a dagger. His life was supposed to be in danger, and, just before I arrived, complete silence was observed about him. Is he dead or alive? Has he gone into retreat? Are they trying to hide his death from the Empress? Paléologue tells me that no one knows. But the Empress anyhow is aware that he has been very seriously hurt and was picked up in a seemingly dying condition; yet she is calm and smiling, and only seems to live for her husband and children.

I offer the presents that I have brought for the Imperial family: Gobelin tapestries representing the four seasons; automobile fittings in gold; library furniture for the Czarewitch; diamond watch-bracelets for the Grand Duchesses, who are open-mouthed with delight and keep on

(The day of the Serajevo assassination.

turning and re-turning them round their wrists. Yet they have very much finer jewels and wonderful pearl necklaces, but the bracelets come from Paris, and Mamma is invoked to admire them as much as they do. I hand the Czarewitch, in the name of the Government, the Cordon of the Grand Cross, duly measured for his childish figure. Paléologue, a few weeks ago, urgently asked that this decoration should be conferred on the heir to the throne, and when the Emperor heard of it, he thanked me very warmly, and said that hitherto he had not allowed his son to receive any foreign decoration, and that it gave him great pleasure to think that the first was awarded by France.

The Czar comes back with me in the carriage to Peterhof, where he gives a luncheon to the French and Roumanian officers, and Count Friedrichs does his best to brighten up Viviani, who is sadly worried about the Caillaux affair as well as anxious about Austria; the Count has aged considerably in the last two years, but he ages with so many precautions that only the very close observer would notice it. About 3 o'clock my Russian General takes me to the station at Peterhof, where are the Emperor and Empress with their daughters; the Czarewitch is not allowed to come, because he is supposed to be either too young or too delicate. Strange and contradictory stories are told about him; some people say that, as quite a child, he met with a serious accident or that a dastardly attempt was made on him, and that he is destined to enjoy only the shadow of manhood; another story is that the poor boy has a tuberculous tumour in his skull. The simple truth is that he is subject to hæmophilia, a malady which means that the least blow or any fall produces subcutaneous hæmorrhage. It is his mother who has transmitted to him this terrible affliction, of which several of the male descendants of the House of Coburg have died. The Empress knows that her son is affected, and this makes her so unhappy that those who know her best say that here lies the explanation of her mystic vagaries. The Grand Duchesses are wearing pink dresses with white cloaks; this is the first time they have been at a military review, and they are overjoyed with the prospect of something quite new.

The journey from Peterhof to Krasnoïe-selo takes half an hour, which I spend in the saloon with the Imperial Family, and on arrival the Empress invites me into her carriage with two of the young Grand Duchesses. With the Czar preceding us on horseback, we go along what seems like an interminable lane of troops; the men who will take part in to-morrow's review are now in undress uniform and without arms, and return the Emperor's salute with the traditional shout which, delivered in rather hoarse tones, echoes all along the line. The Empress points out her regiment and those of the Empress Dowager, the Grand Duchess Vladimir and the Grand Duchess Marie, while the little girls look furtively at their watches, which they have already put round their wrists. During this progress, which lasts for an hour and a half, poor Viviani has to stand in front of the Imperial tent, and, like myself two years ago, he finds it rather tedious. Also he complains of being unwell, and Paléologue, who is sure that he is going to have a liver attack, telephones for a French doctor to come out from St. Petersburg.

We finally arrive before the Emperor's tent, outside which are two arm-chairs, one for the Empress, the other for the Grand Duchess Vladimir. There is no other seat for anyone else, and the Czar, like Viviani and myself and everybody else, stands upright through the whole military ceremony, which I seem to know by heart. The massed bands in front of the troops play some Russian and French music while aeroplanes are flying above, and among them an immense biplane capable of holding twelve people. Then three rockets fired are the signal for the prayer or Zaria. There is a silence throughout the whole camp which can be felt; the Emperor and everyone else uncover, and a non-commissioned officer mounts a little grass hillock and recites the Pater Noster in strident tones, after which, as the setting sun reddens the horizon, the bands play a really very fine and moving hymn.

As happened two years ago, the Grand Duke Nicolaïevitch gives an *al fresco* dinner, and on this occasion the Emperor and Empress are present; the Grand Duchesses

Anastasie and Militza talk to me enthusiastically about France and say—no wonder—that their father, the King of Montenegro, is very nervous as to what Austria has got in the back of her mind. At 9 o'clock the Emperor takes me in his car with his two elder daughters to the Military Theatre, the Empress excusing herself in order, as she graciously says, to nurse herself for the dinner on board the *France* to-morrow. At the theatre the second Act of *Lakme*, several ballets and a group of Russian songs are given; in the intervals the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses ply me unceasingly with questions—questions which I am asking myself and to which I can furnish no answer, for the simple reason that Austria is waiting till I have left Cronstadt to show her hand. We sleep at Krasnoïe-selo; the pavilion reserved for me, if a little larger than what I had in 1912, is very simple, not to say homely, and the bed, truth to tell, is by no means comfortable. This is all the worse, for I can scarcely close my eyes for thinking of what is going on in Austria. But I have no idea that yesterday the German Ambassador has received the text of the ultimatum, and that this afternoon the explosive document has arrived at Berlin.[1] Herr Jagow[2] has since affirmed that he did not read it until the evening when the Austrian Ambassador brought him another copy which he found too rough in terms, but the Ambassador replied: "It is too late to alter now". Count Szögenyi declares on the other hand that Herr Jagow entirely approved the text and tone of the Note.[3] Anyhow neither Jagow nor Hollweg telegraphs to Vienna to advise that the ultimatum should be a little milder, although they had plenty of time to do so, as they knew that the Note would not be presented to Belgrade until after I had left Russia. But at Berlin, as at Vienna, what was required was not to avoid drastic measures but to present them to the world under the most favourable light possible. On the 22nd July Tschirschky telegraphed to Hollweg:

"I have to-day gone to the bottom of the matter with Count

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[1] German Documents, No. 106.

[2] German Commission of Enquiry.

[3] *Pièces diplomatiques*, t. ii. No. 6.

Forgach as to bringing influence to bear on the Foreign Press. As regards Italy M. de Merey has full power to use whatever money he wants, and at Bucharest Count Czernin has also unlimited means at his disposal. The same with regard to Count Szapary, but he is in less close touch with the Press in Russia, and one would be very grateful if Count de Pourtalès could help him to find some go-betweens. In England money will do nothing . . . and it is thought that to try and work on the French Press with cash will produce no result."

The Chancellor sent the telegram on to Jagow, who at once telegraphed to Pourtalès the need for instructions as to "go-betweens". Where are those paragons of virtue who were so terribly exercised when, in 1912, Isvolsky tried—despite my advice—to get a few thousand francs out of Kokovtzoff in order to prevent some of the minor French newspapers becoming pro-Austrian ?

23rd July.—Everyone asks me about Viviani, who has happily recovered from his liver attack, and is consequently more cheerful. In the same carriage as yesterday we pass along the line of troops ; then the Empress and myself with the Grand Duchesses take up our position on a hillock which dominates the manœuvre ground, while the Emperor and the Grand Duke Nicholas and their suite are on horseback not far off. For the march past tens of thousands of men have been assembled. All fine troops, less correctly "dressed" in line than our own, less fine in appearance, but on the whole the turn-out is good. As soon as the parade is over, the Empress, evidently very tired, leaves us, while the Emperor takes me to his own pavilion, where the usual Russian *hors-d'œuvre* are laid out, and where the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses beg me to taste the caviare. During the luncheon which ensues, the Emperor speaks to me of my forthcoming visit to Sweden, and asks me to tell the King how happy is his recollection of their visits to one another, and how earnestly he looks for the maintenance of the friendly relations between the two countries. With regard to the rather unpleasant matter as to the Russian Naval Attaché, before taking up his duties, going about to pick up secret information and even pretending he could only speak Swedish, the Emperor, without committing himself, says that the War Departments are sometimes a little imprudent, that he will make inquiries, and if the facts are established, he will administer a rebuke. The Emperor asks the Grand Duke Nicholas to introduce me to several of the more important Generals, after which we start for Peterhof. The young Grand Duchesses are wearing the same white cloaks, but to-day they are dressed in blue ; they wear on their wrists the watches I have brought them, but look at them a little less often than yesterday ; the charm of novelty has already begun to wear off.

Not one of us suspected that on this day Prince Lichnowsky, after a long talk with Sir Edward Grey, had strongly but vainly urged Herr Jagow not to let Germany associate herself too closely with Austria.

> " Here ", he telegraphed, " they reckon entirely that we shall not associate ourselves with demands which are obviously calculated to provoke war, and that we shall not support a policy which exploits the Serajevo murder as a pretext to realise Austrian aspirations in the Balkans and to tear up the peace of Bucharest."

The Kaiser made a contemptuous marginal note on the telegram as to looking at things from the British point of view.

Nor had we any idea that to-day the Chancellor had warned Count Wedel that the Austrian Note would be sent in a few days, and had added :

> " The intervention of the other Powers will push us into the conflict ; of course there is nothing immediate, that is to say, England is not going to make up her mind at once to come in. The voyage of President Poincaré, who is to visit Stockholm, Copenhagen and Christiania and does not arrive at Dunkirk until the 31st, will delay anything of this sort. The English Fleet is to separate on the 27th and go back to port ; a premature concentration of our Fleet might provoke a good deal of anxiety and rouse suspicions in England."

At 6 P.M. the Czar takes me to his yacht and with the Czarina and other " personages " we proceed to the *France*, where I entertain them to dinner. The dinner—as often happens when no hostess supervises—is not a culinary triumph, but the special bread is highly praised, the cheery Duke Nicholas swallowing large chunks of it amid much laughter. Two short speeches, a little talk on deck, a truly cordial farewell, and the visit is over.

When in 1916 Viviani returned from an important mission to Russia, he brought me an autograph letter from the Czar who was at his military headquarters :

> " CHER ET GRAND AMI—At this moment when France and Russia are bound together more closely than ever before in a war without precedent or parallel which they are waging together with their faithful Allies, it is [1] a great happiness to me to see here a member of your Government. I have had the greatest pleasure in meeting again M. Viviani and of recalling my last interviews with you. Our only thought then was to ensure the peaceful development of our two countries, while at the moment the enemy was already weaving his infamous plot against the peace of Europe in the hopes of arrogating to himself the hegemony of the world."

The rest of the letter dealt with the affairs of 1916, but these few lines show that in July 1914 the Czar had no more idea than ourselves of anything like an approaching conflict. Nevertheless since the war, pamphlet after pamphlet has been published in Germany in which Czarism was—as in the German Note to the Peace Conference—charged with the basest plots against the peace of Europe, while others have gone a little further and represented me as propelling Russia into war.

I scarcely see a French politician and President of a Republic so blinded by vanity or ambition as to advise an autocratic Sovereign of a foreign country to plunge into a fearful war. But if I had been bumptious and silly enough to do such a thing, I am very sure the Czar would quickly have put me in my place and told me that he had quite other views as to his duty to his neighbour.

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The impression which Nicholas II. left on Viviani and myself when we left Russia was that of a loyal Ally and a staunch apostle of peace. But the moment of our departure was the moment chosen by Vienna and Berlin to go ahead.

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[1] Indecipherable.

Did they think that up till then the Czar and I, or Sazonoff and Viviani, might have combined to stamp out the first sparks of the conflagration? The Allies kept themselves minutely informed as to my movements, witness telegrams to and from Count Szecsen which we deciphered later:

Foreign Office, Vienna, to Austrian Ambassador, Paris, 11th July 1914 (*very secret*).—With regard to the secret document 8, complete consent has been secured from Germany as to the political situation arising from the Serajevo murder and all its eventual consequences.

Foreign Office, Vienna, 12th July 1914. 1.15.—Please let me know the date of the departure of the President for Russia and how long he is likely to stay there. Please give me any indications as to the programme of the journey.

Austrian Embassy, Paris.—So far as I can learn from a trustworthy source, President will leave France on the 16th. He will embark on the *France* and will probably be accompanied by warships. He arrives in Russia on the 20th, and will perhaps stay there four days. On his return he may pay a short visit to Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Nothing is known as to the programme of his journey, and as Parliament may not have finished on the 14th, departure may be a little delayed.

Austrian Embassy, 13th July.—Foreign Minister says the President will be back on the 31st. He will leave Petersburg on the 24th or 25th. The Minister is not quite sure as to the date and details of the visit to the Scandinavian Courts. There is nothing in the newspapers so far about it; possibly they may have been told not to allude either to the journey of the President or that of the Kaiser to Norway.

Austrian Embassy, 16th July.—Yesterday Parliament unanimously voted the Budget. The President and his suite will start to-night for Dunkirk.

As we steam towards Sweden, wireless telegrams come on board as vague as they are incomplete. We learn that Austria has sent a threatening note to Serbia—the details of which do not at first appear—and has asked for a reply within 24 hours. To wait several weeks before proffering a claim, and then to insist that it shall be acceded to forthwith seems to savour of the brutal. The Austrian Government complains that Serbia having in 1909 accepted the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has in that province persistently pursued propaganda against the Dual Monarchy. They aver that Serbian officers have plotted against the Imperial authority and that the bombs at Serajevo issued from a Serbian military depôt ; they insist that a Serbian officer and non-commissioned officer should be punished forthwith, that the Serbian Government should officially repudiate the revolutionary acts of agents, and that inquiries should be conducted on Serbian soil by Serbian and Austrian functionaries jointly. These terms seem to Viviani and myself very harsh, but far be it from us to enjoin on Serbia any resistance which might lead to grave complications. Viviani telegraphs to St. Petersburg—and thence to Paris and London—that he thinks (1) Serbia should at once offer every satisfaction compatible with her honour and independence, (2) that she should ask for a further delay than 24 hours and that we should press this at Vienna, (3) that the Triple Entente should try and substitute an international for an Austro-Serbian inquiry as the latter might seem very humiliating to Serbia.

Meanwhile, early on the 24th, Sazonoff, learning of the ultimatum to Serbia, sent for the Austrian Ambassador, who handed him a copy of the Note which had been so long hatching. In the afternoon Sazonoff proposed to his colleagues in Council that, agreeably with the other Powers, Russia should ask Austria to extend her period for the answer so as to let the Powers inform themselves—as Austria has invited them to do—with regard to the judicial inquiry to be opened. Serbia was also to be advised not to enter into hostilities with Austrian troops but to retire her own forces and to ask the Powers to prevent a conflict. In the evening Count Pourtalès came to see Sazonoff and tried to justify Austria's action by emphasising Serbia's guilt and the necessity for protecting the monarchical principle. Sazonoff replied—according to Pourtalès—with some warmth, but, however, left the impression on the German Ambassador that he was above all anxious to temporise. Anyhow the decision of the Council registered that on the morrow of our departure Sazonoff then and there expressed the desire to avoid what might be irreparable, and advised Serbia to retire her troops—sufficient evidence that his conversations with Viviani and myself had suggested nothing of "intransigeance". (*Current Hist.*, January 1926.)

As a matter of fact Sazonoff telegraphed the same day to Belgrade: "The situation of the Serbians being hopeless, it would be better for them to offer no resistance and to appeal to the Great Powers." (Tel. No. 1487.)

The only precaution which Russia took on hearing of the concentration of Austrian troops was to authorise the Ministers for War and the Navy to order, if events rendered it necessary, mobilisation of the two fleets and of the four army corps, Moscow, Kiew, Odessa and Kazan. Nor was this decision immediately operative, and it was specified as being only in view of a possible conflict with Austria, and as having no unfriendly character towards Germany.

Neither to Viviani nor to myself had Sazonoff given any hint of these military preparations, which were certainly not in his mind when we left Russia.

On the 23rd July Sir George Buchanan wrote to Sir Arthur Nicholson that Sazonoff was taking a very reasonable outlook and would make no difficulty should Austria ask only for an official inquiry, provided she can prove that the murder was plotted in Serbia, but if "she seeks a pretext in the assassination to take up an aggressive attitude against Serbia, Russia will be forced to intervene somehow. Sazonoff has spoken very firmly to Pourtalès and, while assuring him that Russia only wants to develop her internal resources peacefully, has told him that however 'pacifist', Russia could not remain 'passive' under provocation. Sazonoff thinks Tisza and Forgach dangerous men, and fears the dominant influence of the latter at the Ballplatz. I know and mistrust Forgach; he is very intelligent and ambitious, but wholly unscrupulous." (British Documents, vol. xi.)

On the 24th Buchanan telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey that Sazonoff and Paléologue had told him confidentially that, as a result of my visit, there was agreement between the French and Russian Governments on two points: (1) An eye-to-eye outlook on the different problems which might be presented to the Powers regarding the maintenance of peace and the balance of European power, especially in the Near East (there was, of course, nothing confidential in this). (2) A decision as to how to act at Vienna, a point which had no longer any interest, as Buchanan already knew that Sazonoff and Viviani had instructed their Ambassadors to give friendly advice as to moderation. A third point was as to the solemn affirmation with regard to the obligations imposed by the Franco-Russian Alliance. There was nothing new in this point either, and I do not know why a bit of Sir George Buchanan's telegram was at first suppressed in the Blue Book. It has since been inserted in the British Documents of 1926 and it is only curious that before being published in England it was communicated by the Foreign Office in 1926 to a German, who appears to have been Herr Stieve, and was endued at Berlin with some importance.

In making his communication to Sir George Buchanan Sazonoff was trying to realise a wish which for some time had inspired the Russian Government and which the Austrian ultimatum had of course stimulated. Russia wanted England to declare herself out and out with France and Russia and hoped that thus Austria might show herself a little less overbearing.

Buchanan said he could not engage his Government and only advised that Austria should be asked to give Serbia more time, and on Paléologue remarking that the only chance of avoiding war was for the Triple Entente to set their face like a flint, the British Ambassador concluded by assuring him that Sir Edward Grey would not refuse to represent very strongly at Vienna and Berlin the danger to European peace which an Austrian attack on Serbia would involve.

Sir George did not think that British public opinion was well informed as to the situation. (*Russie des Tsars.*)

In the evening Paléologue, who met Pourtalès coming out of the Foreign Office looking rather flushed, begged Sazonoff to leave no stone unturned to bridge over the difficulty, and asked if he might assure his Government that no Russian military measures had been ordered. Sazonoff did not allude to the two fleets and the four Army Corps, but said their only step had been to withdraw secretly 80 million roubles from the German banks. Paléologue, again begging Sazonoff to be very circumspect at the Council over which the Czar would preside the next day, was told to be quite easy on that point and was reminded of the Czar's own wisdom.

While Sazonoff quite justifiably was boasting of his Imperial master's prudence, the Kaiser was continuing his cruise and employing his leisure by reading the reports and telegrams which reached him. In one of Lichnowsky's telegrams occurred Sir E. Grey's phrase that Austria must reckon with Serbia's national dignity. " Serbian dignity ", exclaimed Wilhelm, " does not exist, and it is not Sir Edward Grey's business but the Emperor Francis Joseph's ; a bit of British impudence ! "

The German Ambassador's telegram of the 24th referred to Sir Edward's pronouncement that if Serbia accepted the ultimatum she would cease to exist as an independent State. " That would be a good thing ", was the comment ; " Serbia is not a State in the European sense of the word, she is a band of brigands."

Lichnowsky added that Sir Edward would be ready to intervene for prolonging the time for the Serbian reply. " Useless," snapped the Kaiser. Sir Edward finally suggested that the Four Powers might mediate between Russia and Austria. " Useless," again said Wilhelm. " I can do nothing unless Austria begs me to do so, which is unlikely. In matters of honour and vital interest one does not consult other people." (*Die deutschen Dokumente.*)

At dawn on the 25th the order is given to hoist the main flag as a Swedish flotilla has come out to salute us. At Falsterbo, where we are at 9 A.M., we must tranship to the *Lavoisier*, as the *France* draws too much water, and in this less imposing vessel, escorted by six torpedo boats, we thread our way through the fjords and drop anchor a little distance from the quay at Stockholm. Here King Gustave comes to greet us ; he steps from a rowing boat which dates from Gustave Vasa, but which has recently been " done up " in such dazzling blue and white as quite to dim my Grand Cordon of the Seraphim. On landing, the Mayor of Stockholm, whose French is amazingly good, makes a little oration; then the usual ceremonial inspection of the Guard of Honour, and a rapid ride in a gala landau to the Palace precedes a day in which frothy festivities alternate with gloomy reports.

A telegram of the previous day from the Quai d'Orsay ran:

> "The German Ambassador has this afternoon seen M. Bienvenu-Martin and categorically supported the Austrian ultimatum. He read out a German Note to the effect that the German Government considers the matter as one wholly between Austria and Serbia. They earnestly wish the conflict to be localised, and any intervention by another power may by the interplay of alliances provoke consequences which it is impossible to calculate. The telegrams from London and Berlin are pessimistic."

Both Viviani and I viewed very seriously this *démarche* of Baron Schoen. The long and the short of it is, Germany diametrically opposes the idea of a European concert such as in 1912 and 1913 was often our refuge from a general war. She intends to give her "valiant second" a free hand to remonstrate with and to chastise the little neighbouring kingdom.

Animated by quite a different spirit, Paul Cambon has suggested to Sir Edward Grey that we should get into immediate touch with Berlin. The English statesman—who thought the Austrian ultimatum quite exorbitant—has willingly agreed to ask Germany to approach Austria to secure further time for Serbia's reply. Paléologue telegraphs that the Russian Government has done much the same thing. Will Germany agree anyhow to join in this effort? Nothing seems less likely, but if she refuses, on her shoulders will surely lie much of the responsibility for the violence of her Imperial Ally.

Jules Cambon telegraphs that Herr Jagow has said to him: "I did not know the contents of the Austrian Note before it was sent, but I fully approve it, and we have only one thing to do, to restrict the area of the fight". This is the idea which Baron Schoen has received a mandate to sustain, but it is quite clear that if the struggle, however localised, becomes costly in lives, there is everything to fear for the future. One knows, of course, that Herr Jagow, when he said that he did not know about the Austrian Note until after it was gone, was a good deal beside the truth. In his own book he has acknowledged that the document was communicated to him at latest by 8 o'clock on the evening of the 22nd, and even if this version is true, it would still have been easy for him to telegraph to Vienna, as the two Chanceries were agreed not to present the Note at Belgrade before 6 o'clock on the evening of the 23rd. There is further Herr Zimmermann's avowal. On the 11th August 1917, this worthy wrote to Von der Busshe :

> " The statement in the *Evening News* is quite correct so far that we did actually receive the ultimatum about twelve hours before it was handed to Serbia, but I don't remember saying a word about it to any American diplomatist, and a *démenti* can therefore be published."

(In other words, one can give the lie to a fact so long as the fact is not known.) And Herr Zimmermann goes on :

> " But as to the advisability of the *démenti*, since we cannot indefinitely conceal that we knew about the document, this becomes another question."

The matter is therefore quite set at rest, and no doubt exists that in this respect Herr Jagow deliberately deceived our Ambassador.

During the hours we pass in Sweden, reports tumble over one another, some rather confused and many rather contradictory, and it is King Gustave and his Government who kindly keep us *au courant* of all that they know themselves. Fearing that the situation may become worse, and anxious to assume full responsibility, Viviani asks M. Pognon, the Director of the Havas Agency, who is with us, to announce that the Chief of the Government and Foreign Minister is in personal communication with all the diplomatic posts and has resumed complete direction of his office. Can we, however, cancel our visit to Denmark and Norway where everything has been arranged for us? Our decision to stick to our programme is largely governed by the news which we at first receive that the Kaiser is still cruising on the Norwegian coasts. A little later we hear that he has suddenly and quite unexpectedly left, but whither he has betaken himself no one knows. Of course he has gone back to Berlin to take charge, and I can only—and very uncomfortably—remember the unhappy impression which the King of the Belgians retains of all that the Kaiser said to him last year.

From Belgrade comes next to nothing in the way of news. Our Minister, M. Descos, was a distinguished Civil Servant, but somewhat a prey to a morbid imagination, and ill-health has necessitated his being replaced by M. Boppe who has scarcely yet got into the saddle ; it is from the King of Sweden that we learn that at 6 o'clock this evening, that is to say, at the precise expiration of the period fixed by the ultimatum, the Austrian Minister has left Belgrade. According to Dumaine the Austrian Government has already mobilised several Army Corps and has sent reservists to Raguse with Mount Loevchen as their objective; there is therefore in their mind a tussle not only with Serbia but with Montenegro.

Bienvenu-Martin telegraphs to Viviani :

> " Your instructions have been immediately sent to Vienna, but we learn this morning that the Austrian Note was sent off yesterday evening to Belgrade. This Note, of which we have not yet the official text, seems very drastic . . . it only gives Serbia till 6 o'clock on Saturday evening to carry out its terms. In forwarding your instructions to M. Dumaine I have begged him to confer with his English and Russian colleagues to find out if—and in what degree and in what form—the Ambassadors of the Triple Entente think that the immediate situation allows them to act without fresh instructions from their Governments."

A little later we have confirmation as to the gravity of the Austrian Note incident, and while Dumaine has telegraphed that the suddenness and exaggeration of the Austrian demands rather startled Viennese opinion, Jules Cambon wires, " the German press has taken a very threatening turn and evidently wants to intimidate Russia ". Then comes the full account of Baron Schoen's visit to the Quai d'Orsay. The German Ambassador read a Note of which he did not leave a copy, in which was set out, under slightly different wording, Austria's arguments that Serbia had failed in the engagement she took in 1909; that she had almost officially endorsed the anti-Austrian propaganda which threatened the safety of the Monarchy. The Note added that nothing but immediate satisfaction accorded to Austria's legitimate claims could close the situation; but Serbia's frame of mind is such that she is much more likely to refuse the satisfactions and to take up a defiant attitude. In such case Austria—so says Germany—might be led to exercise strong pressure on Serbia, even by military force if necessary. The German Government thinks the matter should be adjusted between Austria and Serbia, and it behoves the Powers to leave them alone; Germany is very anxious that the area of the war should be closely restricted and thinks that any interference from outside would do harm. The Ambassador was very emphatic on these last two points and Bienvenu-Martin could only observe that just as it was perfectly legitimate to insist on the punishment of all the accomplices in the murder, so it was difficult to exact anything which was incompatible with Serbia's dignity and sovereignty; even if the Serbian Government were itself willing to risk this, it would itself risk being swept out of office by a Revolution. Viviani's *locum tenens* completed his day's series of bits of information by a résumé of incidents and interviews which had come under his knowledge. Count Berchtold has told the Russian Chargé d'Affaires that the Austrian Minister is under orders to leave Belgrade at 6 P.M. unless instructions as to complete submission have been received by him; Jagow continues to affirm to Jules Cambon that the German Government did not know what was in the Austrian Note; Paul Cambon has suggested to Edward Grey mediation *à quatre*, a proposal which the Secretary of State likes; Sazonoff has told Paléologue that he thinks Austria should be allowed to put herself completely in the wrong. "I think", he has said, "that if the Austrian Government even takes the field Serbia should allow herself to be invaded without fighting and should announce to the civilised world the infamy of Austria."

While we are getting these fragments of news the Kaiser returns in feverish haste to Germany and personally orders the Fleet back to Kiel. Herr Hollweg telegraphs to his Imperial master that the British Fleet is about to disperse after manœuvres, and that Sir Edward Grey anyhow for the moment does not contemplate any participation by England in a European war; the Chancellor suggests that it might be well not to order a premature return of the German Fleet. To this suggestion a sharp answer was sent with a contemptuous underlining of the "civilian":

> "The mobilisation at Belgrade may result in a Russian mobilisation, when Austria may have to do the same thing. In such case I must concentrate all my forces, both naval and military; this is what the *civilian* Chancellor has not yet been able to grasp."

What a pleasant régime in which the caprice of a man (and such a man) can override prudent ministerial advice.

Viviani and I, of course, do not know of this little tiff between the Kaiser and his Chancellor, but having read and re-read all the telegrams to hand, Viviani eases his mind by wiring to Paris:

> "Despite what the German Ambassador has said to you and which tends to forbid any intervention on the part of the Powers between Austria and Serbia, I think it is our duty to confer with Russia and England as to any means by which we can prevent a struggle in which the other Powers may quickly find themselves engaged. If Austria insists on an inquiry on Serbian soil as to the origin of the attempt on the Archduke, could we not at the right moment suggest that the inquiry might be extended to include the other Powers; the recent conference at Rome over the Anarchists might be quoted. I am begging Paul Cambon and Paléologue to ask the British and Russian Governments whether a combination is possible which, without ruffling the dignity of Serbia, might—if the other Powers assented—not be rebuffed at Vienna. As the Austrian Note contains demands for individual sanctions and for guarantees for the future I think that Serbia could give immediate satisfaction on these points, if the points are clearly shown, especially as the Serbian Government has for a month kept silence as to any complicities which the assassination itself might expose. In giving M. Boppe an account

of your interviews with Baron Schoen, please beg him to take his cue from them when he first interviews the Serbian Government."

This telegram had only one flaw, which was not our fault, that it was too late to have any effect on Austria, and on this very day the Kaiser, hearing of the impression made by the Austrian ultimatum at Belgrade, pencilled on the margin of the telegram :[1]

> " How hollow this soi-disant Serbian Great Power shows herself! All the Slav States are alike, and one must stamp on the beastly thing."

What would German writers who have expounded the origins of the war have said if the Soviets had found among the Czar's papers ebullitions of this sort ?

Despite gnawing anxiety I must keep smiling to do justice to the unrelaxing attentions of my royal host, who himself has only just recovered from the effects of a serious operation, and has been through the troubled waters of a changed Government. The Queen Consort, German by birth and of pronounced German proclivities, is in poor health as well as being blind of one eye, and telegraphs to me her regrets that she is not well enough to leave her country place.

The King has with him his brother, Prince Charles, a cavalry general, a fine-looking man but terribly deaf, and his sons, the Crown Prince, whose wife is a daughter of the Duke of Connaught, and Prince William, who is separated from his wife, a daughter of the Grand Duke Paul of Russia. Prince William represented his father at the Coronation of the King of Siam and was then the guest of France in Indo-China ; he tells me much that is interesting about Cambodge and Sisovath, only I cannot keep my thoughts off Serajevo. The Duchess of Vestrogoth does the honours for the breakfast at Drottningholm, where the gardens are laid out from Lenôtre's drawings ; she is a sister of the King of Denmark, and laughingly protests against some loot in the form of a fountain with two beautiful bronze vases which the country of her adoption took from the country of her birth two and a half centuries ago. I give the King the Czar's message and he tells me how keen he is to preserve Swedish neutrality, that he is and will be the friend of France and hopes to keep the best relations with Russia; but he does complain of something like espionage on the part of Russian attachés.

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[1] German Documents, No. 159.

In the evening official dinner at the Palace; the King in a pithy little speech proposes my health, and I assure him in my reply that France will do everything possible to cultivate and continue the very old and very happy friendship which has existed between our countries. After dinner the War Minister talks to me at length, and speaks of the tact we had shown in the matter of Italy and our three ships. The Foreign Minister alludes to France in the warmest and most sympathetic tones, but is a little chilly about Russia, and indeed suggests that if Russia goes on as she is doing now, she will throw Sweden into the arms of Germany.

M. Nekludoff, the Russian Minister, is all for peace and believes that with goodwill we shall get over the present crisis and dispose of any *malentendu* between Sweden and Russia. An admirable choir of Swedish singers pleasantly interrupts our conversation, and then, under brilliant illumination, the King and the Princes escort us to where the *Lavoisier* is ready to take us back on board the *France*.

26th July. We are *en route* for Copenhagen and M. Lucas of the Foreign Office is busy ciphering and deciphering our wireless messages. Nothing very definite from St. Petersburg or Paris, and despite all the information which French, Russian and English diplomatists have tried to give us, we are reduced to hypotheses. Two days before the ultimatum Sir Arthur Nicolson had again told Paul Cambon that Sir Maurice de Bunsen[1] does not believe in any Austro-Hungarian *démarche* at Belgrade or anyhow in one which might envenom the relations between the two States, and that his opinion is shared by his colleagues. Dumaine, who had been tricked by the Ballplatz, has telegraphed from Vienna on the 22nd of July:

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[1] British Ambassador at Vienna.

"A Note will very shortly be sent to the Serbian Government, the tone and text of which Baron Macchio assures me will be such as to solve peaceably the question of war with Serbia. He is sure that, even if the fight were between the two States only, there might be a very uncomfortable sequel for Austria."

And, next day:

"M. Tisza's speech delivered after the Emperor had expressed himself, is considered as giving good ground for peace. The Note, which I am assured will be sent to Belgrade to-morrow, should not have anything in it which the Serbian Government cannot accept."

So, until the last moment, Austria succeeded in concealing her hand.

In London, Cambon is in closest touch with Sir Edward Grey, who as soon as he heard of the Austrian Note exclaimed that no such "formidable" Note had ever been addressed by one Government to another, and that the gravest complications might ensue. He has drawn Count Mensdorff's attention to the responsibility which Austria has incurred, and he has sent for the German Ambassador in the hope of carrying out his own project to secure the assent of Berlin in view of mediation on the part of the four disinterested Powers, which he thinks should be effected simultaneously at Vienna and St. Petersburg. Cambon has reminded Grey that we know nothing of Russia's intentions, so that any attempt to mediate between Austria and Russia would be not only impracticable but might meet with a rebuff. Cambon would propose that Austria and Serbia should refer themselves to the four disinterested Powers, but neither Germany nor Austria will hear of this, and our Ambassador fears that Russia, exasperated by Vienna's claims, will fly to arms on behalf of Serbia, and that with any aggression against Austria, Germany will come to her Ally's aid, and a European war would be the result. All that we can gather leads us to agree with Sir Edward Grey's word "formidable". From beginning to end stands out Austria's morgue with regard to the Slav peoples who are subject to her.

Even if the alleged facts in the Note are accurate; even if a genuine plot against the life of the Archduke has been conceived at Belgrade by Prinzip and Kabrinovitch, agreeably with the Serbian Commander Tankositch ; even if six bombs and four revolvers with munitions have been given to the assassins by this officer, and even if the bombs have been issued from a Serbian Armoury, the complicity of certain individuals does not involve the responsibility of the Government, still less that of the Serbian people. How then can one explain or justify the text and tone of the Note which has been delivered ? The Serbian Government is to publish in the *Gazette* a solemn disavowal of the culprits which is to be dictated by Austria, the King is to address an Army Order and to order publications to be suppressed, he is to break up the Societies and to dismiss officers and civil servants whom the Austrian Government will name, and he is to accept the collaboration of Austrian officials who are to superintend the inquiry in Serbia as to the murder and to put an end to the revolutionary movement which has been notified.

Before the despatch of the ultimatum when M. Tisza said in Parliament that they must wait for the result of the judicial information, the *Neue Freie Presse* hotly protested against what it considered an exhibition of feebleness. The *Militarische Rundschau* cynically chimed in with :

> " The moment is favourable ; if we don't make up our minds for war now, the war which we shall have to make in two or three years' time will be in far less favourable circumstances for us." (*Rev. de la Semaine*, 24th December 1920.)

Jules Cambon knew exactly what he was talking about when he wrote to us on the 24th July :

> " Under pretext of avenging a dead man Austria wants to revive all her old grievances, and, if possible, repair the blunders she has made since the annexation of Bosnia. . . . Germany is backing Austria very strongly ; the weakness which her Ally has displayed for some years has shaken Germany's confidence in her and Germany finds her rather hard to drag along. Such trials as the Agram and Friedjung affairs have rendered the police at once odious and ridiculous. An article in this evening's *Lokal-Anzeiger* suggests a feeling in the German Chancery to which in Paris we naturally do not pay sufficient attention. I am certain

that the point of view of monarchical solidarity ought to be closely considered in order to appreciate the attitude of the Kaiser, whose highly impressionable nature has certainly been affected by the assassination of a Prince whose guest he was a few days earlier."

German solidarity is abundantly evident, and in the Bavarian Parliament, when the Minister for Public Ways alluded to what seemed likely to happen in the Near East, the whole Assembly, with the exception of the Socialists, showed its sympathy with Austria. Our Minister in Munich on the 25th tells Bienvenu-Martin that Bavarian opinion will unanimously approve of any measures, however extreme, which Germany might take. Our Consul-General at Frankfort writes in the same strain of the Press there; and Jules Cambon's anxiety is very apparent; on the 25th he telegraphs to Bienvenu-Martin that Herr Jagow has postponed his appointment with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires until the late afternoon, that is, until the time is up for the Serbian reply. M. Broniewski was to ask for some slight delay, which Herr Jagow denounced as dawdling, while saying that it was not a question of a war but of carrying out a local affair. " From my information," our Ambassador went on, " I derive that Germany and Austria think that Russia and France are kept back by the hesitations of Great Britain. This is the ground of hopes raised here. Whatever happens, you must consider whether, without taking any public steps, it is not high time for our military and naval authorities to do what is necessary to prevent being taken by surprise." And later: " The Russian Chargé d'Affaires gathers, as I do, that Austria, who repudiates any desire to annex territory, will occupy a portion of Serbia until she receives complete satisfaction. One knows, he says, what ' occupation ' means."

While the good ship *France* pursues her easy way we remain in happy ignorance of many happenings. We do not know that on the 24th July Jules Cambon telegraphed to Paris an extract from the *Lokal-Anzeiger*:

> " At Belgrade the Note will be considered as a tremendous slap in the face; either the Serbian Government will accept the humiliating conditions or, if not, the Austrian guns which have so often been loaded will be loosed off."

We do not know of the return of the Imperial fleet to its post. We do not know that Berchtold has told the new Russian Chargé d'Affairs at Vienna of complete accord as to the pressure to be put on Serbia and that Austria must show herself as a great Puissance whose existence is necessary for the balance of Europe, and that therefore Russia ought to approve her checking sharply a movement aimed at dismembering the Austrian Monarchy. Of course we do not know that the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin had telegraphed on the 25th :

> " Here any delay in beginning military operations is regarded as risky, as it may result in the Powers intervening : we are advised to act at once and tell the world of a *fait accompli*." [1]

We do not know how on the 26th that very curious Russian War Minister General Soukhomlinoff had told the German Military Attaché his country was only preparing for mobilisation, that no mobilisation order had been published, and that if Germany took up arms the Czar would mobilise at once.[2] We do not know of the telegrams sent on and after the 23rd by Jagow and Zimmermann advising Baron Schoen not to let Paris get the impression that Germany knew beforehand of the Austrian Note. On the 24th Zimmermann wired that the newspapers intimated Germany had urged Austria to send the Note and had partly edited it.

> " The rumour comes from (   ).[3] Pray contradict it. We have had no influence on the (contents) of the Note. . . ."

On the 25th July Jagow telegraphed that their Ambassador to Russia reported :

> " I have had a long interview with Sazonoff, who is terribly upset and open-mouthed in complaint of Austria. He was definite Russia could not agree that the Austro-Serbian controversy was purely their own affair, and as Serbia after the Bosnian crisis had entered into European engagements, it was for Europe to see if she had kept them. He would like the dossier of the inquiry to be submitted to the Great Powers, as Austria could

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[1] Austrian Red Book, No. 32.

[2] Telegram, Petersburg, 27th July 1914.

[3] The words in brackets were indecipherable, as was much of the rest of the telegram.

not be left as judge of a matter affecting her own interests. Sazonoff did not consider that the facts as set out in the Austrian Note were wholly proved. I begged him not to let himself ( ) against Austria and not to defend a cause which was (either desperate or detestable). Russia could not make herself (an accomplice of). . . . In the course of the conversation Sazonoff declared, 'If Austria offers violence to Serbia we should declare war against her'. (One can therefore suppose) that Russia (will only take arms when) Austria makes ( ) on Serbian territory. Russia's wish that there should be a European (examination) of the question suggests that she does not contemplate an immediate ( )."

We do not know therefore that Germany was playing the part of Pontius Pilate, that she knew all about the Note without making any attempt to hold back Austria's hand; that after the ultimatum she was bent on letting Austria have her own way with Serbia; that she knew how lamentable would be the effect at St. Petersburg of the Austrian threats and the humiliation inflicted on Serbia, and that she hoped that if Austrian troops did not actually enter Serbian territory, Russia would make no move. We do not know that, contrary to the promise he had made to Sir Edward Goschen, Herr Jagow had neglected to convey to Vienna the request that Serbia might have a little more time.[1] We do not know that Prince Alexander of Serbia had appealed for the Czar's protection, and that the Czar had tactfully replied: "So long as there is the slightest chance of avoiding bloodshed, I shall do everything possible to keep the peace. But if in spite of my most earnest wishes I am unsuccessful, Y.R.H. may be assured that Russia will not remain indifferent to Serbia's welfare." [2]

We do not know that Serbia has wisely agreed—on all essential points—to the ultimatum which every unprejudiced diplomatist might have considered it impossible for her to swallow. Just before the appointed hour, M. Paschitch handed in the reply, which contrasted sharply in tone with the blustering Note. Serbia agreed to publish in the Official Gazette on the 26th the declaration demanded of her, and to issue an Army Order as to the dissolution of the Narodna and any other society disposed to thwart Austria, to modify the Press laws, and to expel from the Army and Civil Service anyone convicted of being concerned in progaganda. The Serbian Government did not even turn down the proposal to include Austrians on the Court of Enquiry, and only asked how this was to be done, and said that it could not accept any measures which would militate against international rights or relations with neighbours. Finally, if Austria were not satisfied with this string of concessions Serbia would refer either to the Hague Conference or to the Conference of Powers responsible for the 1909 Act.[1] The Serbian reply was not actually a surrender at discretion, and Austria was at liberty to discuss the conditions set out in it, but neither the Kaiser himself nor Hollweg could help thinking that Austria had received satisfaction on all important points. But that did not matter a bit. Austria had sworn to have her way, and her Minister turned his back on Belgrade while the Serbian Government mobilised and retired to Nish, and while Austria set afoot twenty Divisions with Serbia as their objective, and with instructions to move on Kragoujewatz.[2]

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[1] German Documents, 166 and 171.

[2] Serbian Blue Book, 33 and 37.

Already at Sofia Bulgarian exultation echoed the ambitions of Pan-Germanists, and after the events of 1913 this partnership was no surprise packet. In a telegram of 25th July M. de Panafieu makes it clear that Bulgaria takes stock of all she will get out of the conflict :

> " The Austrian Minister ", he told us, " has returned to Sofia, had long talks with the Prime Minister, who in his turn has had audiences with the King. It is possible that if Austrian troops invade Serbian soil (which they are said to be going to do to-morrow) it will not be long before Bulgarians are in Serbian Macedonia."

We know little of all this and very little of what is going on in Paris. The wireless was very fitful and, as we found out later, the German Government had given orders for our communications to be interfered with—witness such notes as were found at the Wireless Office at Metz.

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[1] Yellow Book.

[2] Dumaine's Papers.

> "27th July. The Governor orders French radio communications to be interrupted in such manner as not to cause an actual breach of peace."

And on the next day:

> "The Eiffel Tower has tumbled to our intention to interrupt messages and tries to defeat us by speeding up news to the *France* which does not reply. In view of the importance to Russia of these messages, transmission there is equally blocked (*unterbunden*)."

So not only did they wait for our putting to sea before launching the ultimatum, not only were they anxious that we should not with our Allies patch up some understanding with Austria and Serbia, but they rendered it impossible for the French President and Prime Minister to be in touch with their own country.

On the 26th M. Bienvenu-Martin tries to catch us at Copenhagen to let us know that despite Serbian acquiescence,[1] Austria had broken off relations with her, thus showing her foregone determination to annihilate her. On the same afternoon of the 26th, Baron Schoen assures M. Bienvenu-Martin that Austria had let Russia know she neither sought to add to her territory nor impair the integrity of Serbia, she only wanted to "police" her for the sake of order.

It would therefore depend on Russia whether war could be avoided; Germany was wholly in sympathy with France in desiring this, and hoped that France would use her influence with Russia to bring it about. So spoke the Ambassador.

M. Bienvenu-Martin, though a little taken aback, was careful in no way to thwart the suggestion, and tactfully said that the counterpart of any counsel of moderation which France could offer to Russia would be a German recommendation to Vienna that she should avoid any military operations tending to an occupation of Serbia. "No!" quickly said Baron Schoen, who had evidently been carefully coached; "such a step would not be consistent with the position taken up by Germany that the question is one for Austria and

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[1] Only two small points were reserved.

Serbia only." And at Bienvenu-Martin's suggestion that mediation in Vienna and St. Petersburg could be undertaken by the four Powers who were least interested in the controversy, the Ambassador reiterated that St. Petersburg was the only place where anything could be done.

M. Bienvenu-Martin could only say that it was impossible for him to take upon himself to give a favourable answer, especially in the absence of the Prime Minister, to whom he would refer the matter.

Baron Schoen came back that evening and asked Berthelot if the Press could be told that the German Ambassador and the Foreign Minister had in the afternoon discussed, in perfect concord, what was best to do to preserve peace. "Then", said Berthelot, "you think that everything is settled and you can assure us that Austria will either accept the Serbian Note or confer with the Powers as to it?"

"Good gracious, no!" said Baron Schoen.

"Well," replied Berthelot, "if there is no change in Austria's negative attitude, what you ask me to say to the Press is exaggerated; French opinion would be lulled unduly. A false illusion would be created about a situation which is still very shaky, and", Berthelot went on to say, "as man to man I must tell you that I cannot understand what your country is doing, unless it is heading for war; you've informed us more than once that Germany knew nothing of the Austrian Note, and of course we believe you; but how is it that Germany is embarking on an adventure hand in hand with Austria with her eyes shut? How is it that Austria has taken up this overbearing position and burnt her boats behind her without having deliberately weighed with her Ally all the consequences of her decision?"

Baron Schoen listened in silence, looked a little uncomfortable, and then said again that Germany had no earlier knowledge than the other Powers of the ultimatum, but he admitted that if the Serbian answer was correctly reported in the papers he could not explain why Austria had not accepted.

He ended the talk in a most conciliatory manner which, as a matter of fact, reflected his own perfect loyalty.

That night we knew from Luxemburg that the four youngest classes of German reservists were ordered to hold themselves in readiness, and that reservists in general were ordered not to be away from home.

CHAPTER XVII

THE telegrams at night, however scanty their news, show very clearly that there is great anxiety in Paris and great impatience for our return. M. Bienvenu-Martin lets us know that all the Ministers want us back, and that even the Press is reproaching us for going on with our journey at so critical a moment. There is only one thing to be done; however distressing to fail in a promise which I have given to the Sovereigns who have asked me to be their guest, I must telegraph to beg them to accept my excuses in view of the gravity of the circumstances and head straight for Dunkirk. We are the more impelled to this step as the German Emperor has hurried back to Berlin, and it might thus look as if the Chief of the State and the Chief of the Government in France were less interested in their country than the Kaiser in his at a critical moment.

Further telegrams arrive during the 27th, but all we can gather is that Austria has recalled her Minister from Belgrade and started to mobilise. Russia has decided, but in theory only, to mobilise thirteen Army Corps if Austria attacks Serbia; Serbia appears to have yielded all the points of the ultimatum except two. Now if Austria pushes home her success and occupies Belgrade, will Europe let her do it? If Russia steps in, what will England say? What will Germany say?

While we exchange our rather uninformed ideas, events are toppling over one another on the Continent. On the 24th July Sir Edward Grey told Lichnowsky that a State which accepted the conditions laid down by the Austrian Note would cease to count as an independent kingdom, and he had discarded any idea of a mediation *à quatre*. Austria had already tossed this idea aside, and on the 27th her Ambassador at Berlin telegraphed jubilantly to Berchtold:

> "The Secretary of State has told me in confidence that some proposals may be put to you from England, but the German Government will have nothing to do with these, will protest against their being taken into consideration, and will only forward them so as to register the English *démarche*."

So to register the English *démarche*, which was equally ours, was—for Germany—only to try and throw it down.

Germany had quite another plan in her head. At Munich there were noisy demonstrations outside the Prussian and Austrian Legations, at Berlin the crowd sang the *Wacht am Rhein*, and Jules Cambon was writing to Paris that unless the present knot was peacefully untied, or if Russia were troublesome, Germany was thinking of striking a blow; German officers had been recalled to their posts, and certain military preparations were being made. Our Ambassador believed that Germany was convinced England would stand aside. "Without asking for such a statement as Mr. Lloyd George gave in 1911, Germany", he said, "should be clearly told that England would not fail in effective support to France." But of this effective support we are by no means sure; meanwhile the rumour at Berlin runs that England will remain neutral, and this is the impression which Prince Henry said he received during his stay in London and from his conversation with the King. On the 27th M. de Fleuriau, who was in temporary charge at Albert Gate, wrote that according to a Wolff's Agency telegram, Sir Edward Grey had told the Russian Ambassador two days earlier that Great Britain would take no part in an Austro-Serbian conflict, and that Count Benckendorff seemed very disappointed.

This telegram had been suppressed by the Russian Agency, but the Ambassador let Sir Edward Grey see it in order to show him how the attitude of England was being misrepresented in Germany. "It is evident", M. Fleuriau reminded us, "that the War Party in Berlin is doing all it can to persuade the public as to England's neutrality, but happily this false report will be contradicted by the decision taken last night to hold up the demobilisation of the fleet." This was the very first precautionary measure of the British Government; a week earlier the King had at Spithead reviewed the Home Fleet, which had then proceeded to Portland for demobilisation; the orders to suspend this only arrived in the middle of the night of the 26th-27th.

With one hand Germany throws the bridle on Austria's neck; with the other she tries to separate us from Russia. M. Berthelot informed the Press that in an interview with Baron Schoen on the 26th, they had discussed what the Powers could do to keep the peace; the next morning the Ambassador, who knew his Berlin and thought the communiqué quite insufficient to ruffle Russian feeling, left with the Minister a résumé of what he had sent home, begging him to believe that he used a phrase, as to solidarity in desire for peace, in all sincerity.

The résumé ran:

> "The Vienna Cabinet has officially notified St. Petersburg that they have no wish to acquire territory in Serbia or do anything to interfere with the integrity of the kingdom: their only intention is to secure their tranquillity. At this present moment it depends on Russia whether or no a European war breaks out. The German Government firmly believes that the French Government, with whom it is solid in earnest desire for European peace, will use every influence to calm down the Cabinet at St. Petersburg."

Germany then holds to her plan. She will do nothing herself at Vienna, but wants us to do something at St. Petersburg. On the 27th Baron Schoen, having had no further reply from Martin, goes to see Abel Ferry, and says he is ready himself to urge on his Government that the same thing should be done at Vienna as at St. Petersburg. But he knows so well that his Government will turn down the suggestion that he does not even repeat the conversation to Hollweg, and only alludes to it in his later writings.[1] Hollweg himself says to M. Rœdern, the Secretary of State for Alsace-Lorraine: "If we succeed, not only in keeping

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[1] *Vide* Baron Schoen's *Memoirs*.

France quiet but in making her tell Russia to keep quiet, it will have an excellent effect *for us* on the Franco-Russian alliance". There is the rock fact that in the conclusions sent by M. Brockdorff-Rantzau to the Peace Conference, it is definitely recognised that on the 27th of July Germany let slip an opportunity which might have been decisive. Germany—the German signatories to the Note admitted—approved Austria's intention to suppress the Pan-Serb agitation by action which might have to be followed by force of arms. If immediately after the receipt of the Serbian reply of the 27th the Vienna Cabinet had been prevented from taking an irrevocable course, the result would have been decisive, for the Berlin Cabinet had certainly then the impression that Serbia had shown herself pliable. The signatories attribute the attitude of the Imperial Government to "lack of decision", but it was something very different; and one knows that at the moment when the "civilians" were rather belatedly inclined to be conciliatory, the militarists stepped in and spoilt the whole thing. However incomplete the avowal of the German delegation, it is a valuable proof that on the 27th, when Berlin could have preserved peace, she either did not know how to or would not.

Per contra, the Triple Entente racked their brains to try every possible path to peace. When Baron Schoen, who himself did all he could in the same direction, saw M. Bienvenu-Martin on the 27th, he seemed for the first time to approve the idea of getting Austria and Serbia to agree simultaneously to refrain from hostilities. Bienvenu-Martin caught Paul Cambon, who was just starting for London, and begged him to tell Sir Edward Grey of this. Sir Edward had already taken his cue from what was done in 1912 and 1913, and had suggested that the French, German and Italian Ambassadors should be deputed to confer immediately with him as to how the great difficulty could be solved, on the understanding that Russia, Austria and Serbia would meanwhile hold their hands. Prince Lichnowsky, who—like Baron Schoen—was far more amenable than his Government, favoured the idea, and Bienvenu-Martin had at once authorised M. Fleuriau to represent the Ambassador—who was momentarily in Paris—at the conference.

"It is up to Germany", he wrote to him, "to show her goodwill in something more than words, and Sir Edward Grey's idea depends for success on what Berlin says to Vienna; any *démarche* towards the Austrian Government is foredoomed to failure unless Germany has first done the right thing."

It was all of no use; Germany declined to put a curb in Austria's mouth, and seemed to think that her own prestige might be affected if there were the slightest damage to the prestige of her ally. So also she continued to brush aside any practical means of holding Austria off Serbia. Herr Jagow on the 27th rejected Sir Edward's suggestion on the grounds that it would mean a conference to deal with Austro-Russian affairs, and when Jules Cambon persisted, he backed out by reiterating that Germany had engagements with Austria. Germany was all for preventing an Austro-Russian fight, but would not stir a finger in the Austro-Serbian conflict. Cambon, a little surprised by this casuistry, said that one would be the sequel of the other, and that it was vital to obviate new conditions which would induce Russia's intervention. "Must you follow Austria's lead blindfold, and are you not aware of Serbia's answer which her Chargé d'Affaires has handed to you this morning?" queried our Ambassador. No, the Minister had not had time to read it, and would say no more.

On the 28th our wireless is working much better; the King of Denmark's gracious message accepting our excuses is early to hand, and the English proposal was made clearer in that the four Powers were to mediate at Belgrade as well as at St. Petersburg and Vienna, Austria meanwhile to refrain from any offensive against Serbia. Viviani at once telegraphs to accept the plan and to endorse what Bienvenu-Martin had done. M. Sazonoff—who had declared himself as only too ready to accept any suggestion tending to peace—then proposed to the Austrian Ambassador, Count Szapary, that he himself should negotiate between St. Petersburg and Vienna and that Germany should help. "One must", he said, "find a way of giving Serbia a well-merited lesson while respecting her sovereign rights." Count Berchtold would have none of this; he refused point-blank, and told the Russian Ambassador that war was going to be declared by Austria on Serbia. (*Pièces dip.*)

M. Sazonoff's initiative was entirely well meant, and Paléologue telegraphed to us that he was doing everything that he could to keep the peace. Paul Cambon was a little afraid that this itself might furnish Austria with a pretext for evading the English proposal, and Sir Edward Grey had told Prince Lichnowsky that Russia had shown such moderation throughout, especially in her advice to Serbia, that it would be very difficult for him to recommend peace to St. Petersburg, and that it was Vienna where action must be taken and where German co-operation was indispensable.

But as Herr Jagow would only tell the British Ambassador that one must wait to hear the result of the Russo-Austrian conversation, the proposal was perforce held up. As a matter of fact its failure had nothing to do with Sazonoff's appeal to Austria. On the 27th Hollweg telegraphed to Lichnowsky that Germany could not come into any sort of conference as she could not hale Austria before a European tribunal in the matter of her differences with Serbia. He said the same thing to the British Ambassador, while assuring him of his thirst for peace and of his own efforts at Vienna, but adding that it rested with Russia as to whether or no the dogs of wars were to be unchained. Sir Edward Goschen declined to share that opinion, and was emphatic that if war broke out Austria would have a heavy burden of responsibility; it was unthinkable that she should break with Serbia after the reply she had received to her demands. Hollweg was silent on this point, and only murmured that he was doing his best to promote the correspondence between Austria and Russia.

So it would seem that Germany was promoting a direct correspondence, while Austria was turning up her nose at it! Jules Cambon, more and more anxious as to this anomaly, suggested to his British and Russian colleagues that Grey's idea might be modified so far as to have a double diplomatic *démarche* at St. Petersburg and Vienna. "I added", he told us, "that in view of the distaste shown by Jagow for any sort of action at Vienna, it might be well to corner him, and for Goschen to be told to ask the Chancellor in what shape he would like any diplomatic step to be taken by the four Powers. . . . We must do everything we can, so long as it is compatible with our engagements to our allies; but so as not to shift the responsibility from where it now lies, we must ask Germany to put down in black and white what she wants."

France might do everything she could to tender an olive branch, Austria must needs envenom matters. In the afternoon of the 27th, Tschirschky telegraphed to Jagow that the declaration of war between Austria and Serbia was imminent. The telegram was received at the Wilhelmstrasse at half-past four P.M., and nobody seemed to trouble about it. That day Berchtold obtained his Emperor's authority to carry out next morning the irreparable action. Germany could have intervened, but she did not stir a finger. As Renouvin says, it was a question of confronting Europe with a *fait accompli* and of forestalling any attempt at intervention. Berchtold said straight out to the Emperor: "An intervention of the Entente Powers with the endeavour to secure a peaceful solution is always possible until a declaration of war has made the situation perfectly definite." [1]

On this 27th, Sir Edward Grey said to Lichnowsky that Serbia's answer, of which he had just heard, was more satisfying to Austria than he could have thought possible, and was evidently due to Russian influence. So it was now for Austria to show herself conciliatory; if she sets afoot military operations and occupies Belgrade, Russia will read into this a direct challenge, and there will be the most terrible war which Europe has ever known.[2]

Lichnowsky reported at once this conversation to Berlin, and added: "For the first time I found the Minister really displeased, and he spoke with the utmost seriousness. . . . I am sure that if war supervenes we can look neither for sympathy nor support from the English, for they will trace in Austria's conduct clear signs of ill-will." Lichnowsky followed this up a few hours later with another telegram, and his warnings reached Berlin just when it was decided in London not to disperse the Fleet. The German Government considered the matter, and a few minutes before midnight the Chancellor sent fresh instructions to Tschirschky. Herr Delbrück declares that Lichnowsky's second telegram, which arrived in Berlin at 8.40, had not been read by Hollweg when he telegraphed to Vienna ; even if the deciphering had taken so unconscionable a time, the Chancellor knew perfectly of the first warning, of which he sent a copy to Tschirschky. So he says to himself that if he straightway throws overboard Grey's new proposal, he will risk irritating England, and he telegraphs to Tschirschky :

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[1] *Pièces diplomatiques*, ii. 75. Mr. Barnes, in his *Revised Verdict on Guilt for World-War*, thinks it sufficient to quote Margueritte, Luce, etc., to disprove documentary evidence.

[2] Lichnowsky relates that Grey said to him: "When you want anything at St. Petersburg you come to me, but if I ask you to use your influence at Vienna you refuse."

> " If we refuse all sort of mediation, the world will regard us as responsible for the conflagration and as the real culprits in respect to the war ; this would render our situation impossible in the country, where we want to look as if we had been those who had been forced to fight (*wo wir als die zum Kriege gezwungenen dastehen müssen*)."

The Chancellor asked for Berchtold's opinion, and then flattered himself to Lichnowsky as having at once started mediation at Vienna as Grey wished.[1] But, as M. Sazonoff says, " Hollweg was then chiefly concerned not with keeping the peace but with presenting things under a light which might some day make people believe that Germany had been compelled to go to war ".

It was only a cloak which the Chancellor wanted. When he was writing he knew from Tschirschky's telegram (which arrived at Berlin at half-past four) that Berchtold was going to declare war, that Grey's proposal was essentially conditional on Austria's abstention from drawing the sword ; yet he will not budge an inch from his determination not to intervene between Austria and Serbia ; he does not raise his little finger or say a syllable to stop the first gunfire.

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[1] German Documents.

Nay, more. In the evening he told Count Szögyeni that Germany was ready to let Austria know England's conciliatory proposals, that his Government did not take them into consideration, that he only forwarded them to be agreeable to England, and that he hoped they would not be welcome.[1]

German writers, who have always taken M. Isvolsky at his word, even when he played rather off his own bat, will not reckon with this telegram of Szögyeni. They cannot deny that it was sent, nor that it arrived, nor that it was authentic; but if M. Delbrück and others, if Bethmann-Hollweg and Jagow are to be believed, Count Szögyeni was a worn-out, decrepit diplomatist who could not take in either what the Minister or the Chancellor said. He credited them with ideas which they never entertained; these ideas, however, correspond quite closely to what they had said on the previous days. Austria knew, not only by Szögyeni's telegram, but by what Tschirschky had said, the real intentions of the German Government. She delayed her reply to Berlin until the afternoon of the 28th, and then only stated what had happened and reserved her decision. But from now onwards she declares that the British suggestion came too late. And on the strength of a bit of false news which announced a violation of her frontiers by the Serbs, Count Berchtold coolly adds: "War is declared after the opening of hostilities by Serbia". He then waits until the next day (the 29th) to tell the German Ambassador that he regrets he is unable to accept the British proposals and to inform the British Ambassador quite bluntly that he cannot admit any discussion on the basis of the Serbian Note, that war between Austria and Serbia is inevitable, and that the matter will be adjusted directly between the two parties immediately concerned.

But failing Hollweg, did anyone else try to prevent the catastrophe? This suggestion has been made, and to Wilhelm II. is attributed the idea. By the early morning of the 28th the Kaiser was in possession of the Serbian reply and of Grey's second telegram. The former had been in his hands since the previous evening. There seems to have been one of those flashes of light which sometimes crossed the brain of this megalomaniac. "The Serbian reply, what a brilliant and unexpected result for a delay of twenty-four hours; a great moral success for Vienna, but it extinguishes the chance of war; and Giesl should have kept quiet at Belgrade. Then I should never have ordered mobilisation." He has scarcely given vent to this opinion, which would in the eyes of the world condemn an Austria who had just proclaimed war, and even the German Government itself which had not checked her, when he writes to Jagow:[1]

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[1] *Pièces diplomatiques*, ii. 68.

> "I feel sure that, taking one thing with another, their Monarchical demands are satisfied; the few reservations which Serbia makes can surely be dealt with by negotiation. An almost abject capitulation has been publicly put out and all motive for war thus disappears."

Up to now sound common sense spoke, but here comes the mania. In spite of the capitulation Wilhelm wants Austria to have even more resounding satisfaction and also to obtain guarantees.

> "The Serbs are Orientals and consequently liars and past masters in dawdling. To ensure their promises being kept there should be some measure of *douce violence* [*sic* in the text]. Why not occupy Belgrade as a guarantee? Meanwhile I am ready to act as mediator for peace in Austria; I should reject all conflicting propositions or protestations from other States. . . . I should do the thing in my own way and in nursing as far as possible Austria's national sentiments and the honour of her army. For her Imperial master has already made appeal to that army, and the army must respond to it. She ought thus without doubt to have an entirely public *satisfaction d'honneur* [*sic* in text]; this is the *sine qua non* condition of my mediation."

I, I, I . . . Ich, Ich, Ich . . . is there anything more hateful than this I at a moment when the lives of millions are threatened?

The I, I, I of the Kaiser gets us further away from Sir Edward Grey's proposal. The one absolutely discards all military operations; the other postulates the occupation of Serbian territory. No matter. After having received the rather incoherent orders of his Emperor, Jagow confers with the Chancellor as to the instruction to be sent to Tschirschky. Before the despatch of his telegram Hollweg hears from Prince Lichnowsky that Count Mensdorff has confidentially told him of the secret decisions taken on the 19th July by the Council of Austrian Ministers. The Vienna Cabinet, which had formerly proclaimed that it did not intend to annex any scrap of Serbia, in reality contemplated parcelling out Serbian territory and giving bits of it to neighbours. Mensdorff's avowal made Hollweg very angry as he knew nothing of these fine projects.

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[1] German Documents.

"This Austrian duplicity is intolerable," he wrote on the margin of the telegram. "They refuse to inform us as to their programme; they expressly state that the declarations of Count Hoyos as to the dismemberment of Serbia were purely his own opinion; at St. Petersburg they are innocent lambs, while in London their Ambassador talks of handing over slices of Serbian territory to Bulgaria and Albania."

Will the Chancellor, irritated by this discovery, telegraph to Vienna, "hold hard or we shall not follow you"? Not at all; the instructions which he sends are much more reserved. Despite what he has heard from London, Hollweg does not ask Austria to promise the integrity of Serbian territory; he only says that Austria has left Germany in ignorance of her plans, that the situation is becoming difficult, and that if Austria remains absolutely uncompromising while Germany is being riddled with proposals for conferences or mediation it will end by the Dual Monarchy having to bear, in the eyes of the world—and of Germany herself—responsibility for a general conflict. What is his advice to Austria? Not to say, "Serbian territory will not be given to anybody," but simply to say, "Austria will not annex anything for herself. But she will temporarily occupy Belgrade and other fixed points in order to compel the Serbian Government to comply with her claims." Austria had shown Europe in 1908–1909 that she knew how to translate into annexation an occupation authorised by the Powers. In accepting the Kaiser's first thoughts dictum she could have enjoyed full satisfaction but she easily understood that

Germany had no idea of restraining her, and only wanted to tell England that a *démarche* had been made.

Hollweg had indeed told Tschirschky to avoid creating the impression that Germany wanted to hold Austria in, and he used a phrase which illuminated his mind: "It is of first rate importance that—if the war spreads to the Powers not directly interested—Russia should (*unter allen Umständen*) bear the responsibility". A nod was as good as a wink to Count Berchtold. He plays for time, waits till the evening of the 29th, and then tells Tschirschky that he is ready to renew the declaration of territorial disinterestedness, but he says no word about cutting up Serbia and pretends that he cannot reply at once as to any military measures. The complaisance and the weak knees of the German Chancery made this loophole easy. It was to cut short any attempt at mediation that Berchtold on the 28th of July decided on the declaration of war, and, as Colonel Feyler says, "The signal for European war was given at Vienna on 28th July 1914."[1]

A little after 8 A.M. on the 29th we disembark at Dunkirk, and among those assembled to greet us there are a few who say, "Why did you not come back sooner now that Europe is so anxious and France in possible danger?" One of my interviewers went a little further in telling me, "We have had enough of this! It's the same thing over and over again! It would be better to finish with it once and for all." To him I can only reply, "For the love of heaven don't talk so; we must strive to avert war."[2]

There is a great ovation for us at the station and all the way to the Élysée, which seems deserted, but in the evening Madame Poincaré is back to cheer me in my work. An enormous pile of telegrams is sent over from the Quai d'Orsay, and many of them throw much valuable light on what had been to Viviani and myself some rather obscure corners. Dumaine was specially lucid when he telegraphed that the most disturbing factor was that Germany should have urged Austria against Serbia so as to be able to come to blows herself with France and Russia under conditions which she thinks would be most favourable to herself.

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[1] *Revue d'histoire de la guerre mondiale*, January 1927.

[2] [The fertile brain and fluent pen of Mr. Barnes enabled him to write in the *Current History*, 1927: "The temperament and attitude of Poincaré on his return to France are clearly shown by an anecdote recently revealed by Margueritte, Dupin, and Charpentier. As he left his boat on the 29th at noon (*sic*) Senator Trystram asked him if he thought that war could be prevented. Poincaré replied, 'It would be a great pity for we should never again meet with such favourable circumstances'." To oppose this fable one need only quote the written testimony—under date June 1926—on record of M. Trystram himself and of M. Terquem, Mayor of Dunkirk, that they were with M. Poincaré from the moment he disembarked at a little after 8 A.M. until the train steamed out of the station, and that no such words ever passed his lips.—G. A.]

"On the other hand," he went on, "the people at the Italian Embassy say that the Berlin Cabinet tried to keep Austria from drawing the sword, but the Emperor and Berchtold were determined in their decision by the certainty of an impending break-up of the Monarchy. Berchtold told my British colleague this morning that the situation must indeed be grave, for his venerable Sovereign and himself, both of whom had been criticised for their peaceful intent, to decide for war. The Serbian Minister says to me that the ground is mined and the Austro-Hungarian leaders cannot move without bringing about an explosion; and that it is very regrettable the danger to the Monarchy should be thus disclosed, for in three years the rising generation are sure of the franchise. Thus it is in order to frustrate this inevitable insurrection that the Monarchy makes a supreme appeal to the force of arms, hoping that the quite incalculable consequences of a campaign may create a diversion which can save the Crown." (28th July.)

Our Ambassador thus threw a strong torchlight on the crevices of the Austro-Hungarian edifice. Perhaps, indeed, it really was in order to escape a terrible eruption that Austria hurried into war, and gave the order to bombard Belgrade.

Isvolsky this morning had told us of two telegrams to Berlin and London; the former ran:

"In consequence of Austria's declaration of war on Serbia we announce mobilisation to-morrow (29th) in the districts Odessa, Kieff, Moscow and Kazan. While informing the German Government of this, please confirm that Russia has no sort of aggressive intentions against Germany. Our Ambassador at Vienna is not for the moment recalled from his post."

The telegram to London was:

> "As a consequence of the declaration of war the direct conversations between Sazonoff and Austrian Ambassador have no more *raison d'être*. It is vital that England should take mediative action as quickly as possible and that Austrian operations should be immediately stopped. Otherwise mediation will be used only as a pretext for dragging on the solution of the question and may give Austria meanwhile the chance of crushing Serbia."

The Russian telegrams were the more disquieting because we were hearing at the same time that Germany was speeding up military preparations. Baron Schoen at the Quai d'Orsay in the afternoon alluded to the precautionary measures which France had already taken. These Viviani did not deny, and only said that nothing had been done at which our neighbours could take the least umbrage, and that no shadow of doubt could be thrown on our desire to keep the peace. Baron Schoen quite pleasantly, as usual, replied that France, of course, must do as she liked and only added that Germany's preparations could not be kept secret and that their publication must not be allowed to inflame French opinion. Baron Schoen, who knew us thoroughly, telegraphed to Berlin that evening:

> "Viviani will not give up hope of peace which here is most earnestly desired."

Late at night came a telegram from Paul Cambon which certainly could not act as a narcotic:

> "Sir Edward Grey has told Prince Lichnowsky that as Sazonoff's overtures for direct conversations between Russia and Austria have been turned down at Vienna we must get back to the idea of a friendly intervention of the four Powers not directly interested. This suggestion has been accepted in principle by the German Government, which, however, objects to the idea of conference or mediation." (No. 157.)

Sir Edward, the telegram went on to say, had asked Lichnowsky to beg his Government to propose a formula for themselves, and said that whatever it was, France and Italy would agree to it if it provided for peace. Lichnowsky had queried as to the intentions of the British Government in case of war, and the Secretary of State replied he had nothing to say on the matter for the moment. To our Ambassador he had observed : " The situation is not the same as it was about Morocco, where it was a question of the interests of France with whom we had engagements. Here it is a matter of the supremacy of Austria or Russia over the Slav peoples of the Balkans. It does not much matter to us which of these Powers gets the lead, and if it were a simple question between Austria and Serbia or Russia it would be no business of ours. But it is quite another thing if Germany steps in to back up Austria against Russia and if eventually France were dragged into the conflict. Then it would be a question of the balance of European Powers, and England must see if she ought to intervene. Anyhow, we are secretly taking some military measures. I shall tell this to Prince Lichnowsky when he brings me Berlin's answer to my question of to-day." Paul Cambon concluded his telegram with the not very cheerful news that Sir Edward Grey was the reverse of an optimist as regards a peaceful solution of the tangle.[1]

Desperately anxious as I was, I should have been even more unhappy had I known that on this day General Moltke handed to Hollweg a memorandum in which he set out a sinister sequence : partial Russian mobilisation, general Austrian mobilisation, German mobilisation, French mobilisation.[2]

It was also on this day that the Chancellor received an urgent note from the Austrian Headquarters Staff, in which it was asked that as soon as Russia had mobilised her four districts for the Austrian frontier, Germany should take all military counter-measures. It was on this afternoon and at Potsdam that the Kaiser was receiving the Chancellor, the Minister of War, the Chief of the Staff, and the naval authorities.[3]

The soldiers wanted to publish at once "danger of war" which would be synonymous with mobilisation, but the

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[1] In view of this, how could M. Fabre-Luce speak of England being locked with us ; had there been any alliance, even if only defensive, would not that gallant gentleman, Sir Edward Grey, have at once fulfilled his engagements ?

[2] German Documents, 29th July.

[3] Renouvin.

Chancellor arranged that for the moment it should only be a matter of military protection for the railways and of one or two pure preliminaries, such as cancelling leave, gun constructions in the fortresses; much the same as the Russian pre-mobilisation.

On this afternoon Herr Jagow sent by special messenger to the German Minister at Brussels the text—drafted three days earlier by Moltke—of the ultimatum to be delivered presently to Belgium.

In the evening the Chancellor tried to extract from Sir Edward Goschen a promise of British neutrality. "We assure your Government", he said, "that Germany, even in the event of victory, will not ask for compensation in the shape of French territory in Europe": in other words Germany would be content with Colonial possessions.

And it was on this day that the Czar proposed by telegram to the Kaiser to refer the Austro-Serbian problem to the Hague Conference; a telegram which the Kaiser marked with a contemptuous *Nanu*. And at night Austria not having replied to the Russian proposal of direct talk, the Chancellor thought it prudent—in order to reassure England—to telegraph to Vienna: "Russia complains that conversations do not proceed; we should therefore, to avoid a general catastrophe or anyhow to put Russia in the wrong, express the wish that these should be begun and continued." Just after 9 o'clock there arrived at Berlin the telegram in which Prince Lichnowsky announced a new, supreme attempt of Sir Edward Grey. Sir Edward makes a long step towards the German position and yields the point that Austria shall occupy Belgrade or other Serbian towns on the distinct understanding that she must at once make known her exact intentions. And in order to make Germany sit up and think he adds that if she gets herself dragged into war with France, the British Government might be forced to come to some very prompt decision, and in such case could not for long stand aside. This message stung Herr Hollweg to telegraph once more to Austria:

"We are quite ready to fulfil our obligations as allies, but we must and do refuse to be drawn by Vienna without serious reason, and without our advice being listened to, into a general conflagration." [1]

The Chancellor telegraphs to Lichnowsky to reassure Grey; and to Count Pourtalès: [2]

> " Pray tell M. Sazonoff that we continue our course of mediation but on condition that Russia meanwhile abstains from any active hostility towards Austria."

So the Chancellor no longer protests against the partial mobilisation in Russia, but only stipulates that no offensive shall be taken against Austria. But Austria continues to shift and shuffle, to twist and turn, and Count Berchtold declares he is unable to give an immediate answer. Austria quite evidently wants to have it out with Serbia. The German Government has put the reins on Austria's neck, who has bolted and can no longer be stopped.

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[1] " England throws off the mask just when she thinks we are at bay . . . it means that we should forsake Austria," was the Kaiser's comment on Sir Edward Grey s message.

[2] German Documents.

CHAPTER XVIII

BEFORE 2 A.M. on the 30th Viviani was at my bedside with a telegram from Sazonoff to Isvolsky which ran :

> " The German Ambassador has just told me his Government will mobilise her armed forces if Russia does not arrest her military preparations. Now these preparations are purely the sequel of the mobilisation of eight Austrian Army Corps, and of the open refusal to agree to any peaceful adjustment of her differences with Serbia. As we cannot accede to Germany's wishes, it only remains for us to hasten our armaments and to face the imminence of war. Pray let the French Government know of this, and at the same time express our sincere thanks for the official declaration that we can wholly rely on the help of our ally, which in the present circumstances is intensely valuable. It is very much to be desired that England, without losing a moment, should join hands with France and Russia, for so, and so only, can she succeed in preventing a dangerous overset of the balance of European Power." [1]

M. Sazonoff in the telegram, for very good reasons, does not quote any promise made or word uttered by me at Peterhof or elsewhere. If any sort of engagement had been entered into, either by Viviani or myself, Sazonoff would certainly have alluded to it in so urgent an appeal. Thus falls to the ground the silly story that was put about, and which it has been sought to revive in commenting on the telegram from Sir George Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey sent the day after we left Russia. M. Sazonoff can only quote a declaration made by M. Paléologue in the name of the French Government when our Ambassador received the telegram sent off from our cruiser on the 27th containing the phrase :

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[1] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th August 1927.

? But for a defensive alliance to be applied, there must be an agreement that [illegible] be mobilised

"Please tell M. Sazonoff that France—appreciating as Russia does the cardinal importance of the two countries affirming their entire agreement both as regards the other Powers and as to neglecting no opportunity to solve the great problem—is ready, in the interests of peace, to endorse wholly the general action of the Imperial Russian Government."

But this declaration must stand as a whole. It was made in the interests of peace and at a moment when Austria had not declared war on Serbia, and when we had no idea that Russia was thinking of mobilising. But as Viviani thought that M. Sazonoff was giving rather too large a meaning to our assurances, he telegraphed, with my approval, to St. Petersburg late at night:

"As I pointed out to you in my telegram of the 27th, the Government of the Republic is determined to spare no effort with regard to the solution of the conflict, and to back up the Russian Government in the interests of a general peace; France is moreover quite resolved to fulfil all her obligations as an ally, but in the interests of that same general peace, and as the Powers less interested are now conferring, I think it would be well that in the precautionary and defensive measures which Russia thinks necessary to take, she will do nothing which might afford a pretext to Germany for either a general or partial mobilisation of her armed forces." (Cf. Viviani, p. 149.)

This recommendation was both wise and absolutely consistent with our relations as an ally; our duty was not overlooked and there was no word which could lightly break an alliance which for many years had contributed to our mutual safety. Viviani wired a copy of the telegram to Paul Cambon and asked him to remind Sir Edward Grey of the correspondence in 1912 with regard to what the two Governments should do in case of European tension. The two telegrams were sent off as soon as they could be ciphered, but Viviani had already told Isvolsky of his message to M. Paléologue.

One may ask what was the spirit of the Russian Government when Viviani's recommendation reached Petersburg. On the 28th, after Austria's declaration of war, the Czar sent the Kaiser the well-known telegram:

"I am very glad you have gone back to Germany and in this grave hour I beg you to help me. A disgraceful war has been declared against a weak country. . . . To prevent the terrible calamity of a European war, I beg you for the sake of our old friendship to do everything in your power to prevent your ally from going too far. NICKY."

The Kaiser minutes this telegram with two points of exclamation against the words " disgraceful war " and adds:

" A confession of his own weakness and an attempt to saddle me with the responsibility of war ; the telegram contains a veiled threat and an appeal which is very much like an order to hold back the hand of an ally."

The Kaiser's telegram to the Czar was in the nature of an apology for the Austrian action :

" It is with the greatest anxiety that I have learnt of the impression which Austria's forward movement has made on your Empire. The unrest which has gone on for many years in Serbia has led to the monstrous outrage of which the Archduke Franz Ferdinand has been the victim. I am sure you will agree with me that you and I—like all Sovereigns—are equally interested in insisting that the culprits responsible for this terrible murder shall receive the punishment they deserve. Further I am quite aware how difficult it is for you and your Government to resist manifestations of Public Opinion. In remembrance of the cordial friendship which has linked us together so closely and for so long, I shall do all in my power to persuade Austria to come to some honourable agreement with Russia. I count on your backing all my efforts in the direction of avoiding difficulties which may still arise. Your sincere friend and devoted cousin, WILLY."

There has been some discussion as to the dates and times of despatch of these two telegrams, and the White Book does not agree with the German documents or Soviet publications.[1] One thing certain is that the Czar's telegram, written entirely in his own hand and preserved in the Russian Archives, is dated the 15th July (our 28th) ; it is equally certain that Nicholas sent to Wilhelm at half-past eight on the 29th July a reply which has been treacherously suppressed in the White Book, and which is of first-rate importance.

" I thank you for your conciliatory and friendly telegram which differs altogether in tone from the official communications between your Ambassador and my Minister, and I would beg you to find out the reason of this difference. It would surely be better to refer the Austro-Serbian problem to the Hague Conference; I have entire confidence both in your judgment and your friendship. Your affectionate NICKY."

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[1] Schilling's *Diary*

So, Austria has declared war on Serbia, Belgrade is bombarded, and the German Ambassador indulges in threatening language in Petersburg, while the Czar remains quite willing that the matter shall go before the Hague Conference. How about Germany's reply? The Kaiser pencils a satirical exclamation mark against the words "Hague Conference", and Hollweg telegraphs to Count Pourtalès:

> "I beg Your Excellency to see M. Sazonoff and explain the alleged difference between your language and His Majesty's telegram; the notion of the Hague Conference must of course in these circumstances be ruled out."

Until Austria declared war the main decision taken by the Russian Ministry, 24th July, had not been carried out, and it was not until the 28th that the mobilisation of the four military districts was announced; and this because—according to Pourtalès himself—Russia's firm attitude had not prevented Austria's declaration. Without doubt Sazonoff's change of attitude was due to this Austrian action. Pourtalès might have added, due also to the co-operation or, anyhow, benevolent inaction of Berlin. On the 28th, Sazonoff telegraphed to Paris, Berlin, London, Vienna and Rome, that with Austria's pronouncement his own programme had become useless and the immediate intervention of England was necessary, as also the arrest of Austria's military operations. His second telegram announced the mobilisation of the four districts and at the same time the entire lack of any aggressive intention as regards Germany, also that the Russian Ambassador at Vienna was not recalled.[1]

A long military discussion took place that afternoon in St. Petersburg, and General Daniloff, who had been recalled from leave, was much surprised at the Ministerial decision for a partial mobilisation, which he thought rendered it difficult to mobilise entirely. His opinion was shared by his military colleagues, who knew that any partial mobilisation could only have been an improvisation with elements of disorder and confusion just when it was necessary to regulate everything with mathematical precision. In most countries partial mobilisation only affects the zone where it actually takes place, but in Russia it was otherwise, as the enormous size of the Empire, the very poor railway system and the wretched slowness of communications obliged the General Staff to make their chief concentration towards the Western Frontier, while their largest resources in men and horses would be drawn from the provinces of the East and South. For these, among many other, reasons Russian mobilisation and concentration were very slow and very complicated as compared either to ourselves or the Central Powers. The thing was done there on a single plan which rendered difficult and even dangerous a partial mobilisation of thirteen Army Corps in the four districts.

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[1] *Vide* Pourtalès' Preface, *Dobrorolski's Memoirs.*

That evening the Russian General Staff prepared two forms of ukase, one for a partial, the other for a general mobilisation,[1] but neither of these were signed by the Czar, let alone countersigned by the Senate, when that night Sazonoff announced to the Chancelleries what would take place on the following day.

On the morning of the 29th Pourtalès brought to M. Sazonoff what he thought would be the agreeable news that the German Government was inclined to advise Austria to make concessions, and that it was hoped that this advice would not be thwarted by a premature mobilisation; Sazonoff replied that the Russian Army would stand steady for weeks together without crossing the frontiers, and that it was now only a question of mobilising the districts which were Austria's neighbours; not a word to him or to Count Szapary, who followed him, as to a general mobilisation.

According to General Dobrorolski and General Daniloff, General Yanoushkévitch brought the former a proclamation signed by the Czar, and ordering general mobilisation on the morning of the 29th; according to Baron Schilling's journal, which is a contemporary document, the order was not signed until the afternoon; anyhow, it was not until then that M. Sazonoff knew of it. Either at three or six o'clock Count Pourtalès read to M. Sazonoff a telegram from the German Chancellor to the effect that if Russia continued her military preparations even without going so far as mobilisation, Germany would be compelled to mobilise, when it would be a case of her immediately assuming the offensive. "Now", exclaimed Sazonoff, "I have no further doubt as to the real causes of Austrian intransigeance"; Pourtalès leapt from his chair and cried out, "I protest with all my might against so wounding an assertion"; to which Sazonoff retorted that Germany would always have the opportunity of proving him mistaken. There was a very chilly parting between the Minister and the Ambassador.

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[1] Dobrorolski.

A few minutes later the Czar telephoned to Sazonoff that he had received a telegram from the Kaiser begging him not to let things drift into war. Sazonoff told the Czar of the talk he had just had with the Ambassador, and pointed out the discrepancy between the tone of the German Emperor and that of his representative, and the Czar replied he would at once telegraph to Berlin to ask for this to be explained; His Majesty also agreed that Sazonoff should confer at once with the War Minister and the Chief of Staff. The conference issued a resolution, which was telephoned to the Emperor, that in view of the little likelihood of war with Germany being avoided, it was necessary to make timely preparations for such an eventuality, and that the general mobilisation must not be risked by an immediate partial measure. The Czar consented, but just before the orders were issued, he changed his mind. Telegrams had passed between him and the Kaiser, and from the latter had come:

> "I think that an agreement between your Government and Vienna is both possible and desirable, and, as I have already telegraphed to you, my Government is doing everything to bring this about. It is quite sure that any Russian military measures, which Austria will consider as a threat, may precipitate the

catastrophe which we are both anxious to avoid, and will compromise me in my rôle of mediator which I have so gladly accepted on your appeal to my friendship and for my help."

The Czar saw in these lines a possibility of peace, and telephoned to Yanoushkévitch, who begged him in vain not to cancel the general mobilisation order.

The Kaiser's word of honour had weighed with the Czar, who ordered that nothing but partial mobilisation should be decreed the next day. General Soukhomlinoff declared in 1917 that the Czar's wish had not been respected, and that despite his order, general mobilisation had been started. But he does not re-state this in his *Souvenirs*, and his evidence is contradicted by his colleagues, as well as by Schilling, Sazonoff and Paléologue. I can imagine this General disobeying the Emperor if he thought that he would not be found out, but imagination boggles at the idea of his openly rebelling against his Sovereign in July 1914.

On receipt of Viviani's telegram our Ambassador hurried off to beg Sazonoff to steer clear of anything which might give Germany an excuse to mobilise; he was told that the General Staff had just suspended taking some secret precautionary measures, an inkling of which might alarm the German Staff, and that the Chief of the Russian Staff had, the day before, sent for the German Military Attaché and given his word of honour that the Russian mobilisation so far ordered was in view of Austria and Austria only.

The formulas of Sazonoff and the Russian General Staff are a little vague, but it is clear that the public at St. Petersburg was very uneasy. The morning papers announced that the Austrian Army had bombarded Belgrade, and Paléologue telegraphed to us (30th July):

"The bombardment of Belgrade provokes considerable anxiety throughout Russia; the Government's efforts at moderation are likely to be paralysed."

And again (at 1.15 P.M.):

"According to information received by the Russian General Staff, mobilisation of the German Army will be ordered to-morrow."

Half an hour before the arrival of this disquieting intelligence (*i.e.* at 3 P.M.), M. Isvolsky brought to the Quai d'Orsay a note :

> " M. Sazonoff telegraphs this morning that the German Ambassador has just asked him if the Imperial Government would not be content with a promise from Austria not to violate the integrity of Serbia ; the reply was that a declaration like this did not suffice. In response to an urgent request from the Ambassador that he would specify under what conditions Russia would still consent to stop arming, M. Sazonoff dictated as follows : ' If Austria, recognising that the Austro-Serbian question has taken on a European character, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum any point which violates the sovereign rights of Serbia, Russia undertakes to stop her military preparations.' M. Sazonoff at once informed the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, telling him to let him know immediately how the German Government would receive this new proof of Russia's willingness to do everything possible to secure a peaceful issue to the crisis." (30th July.)

Admittedly this proposal was a little belated and had scant chance of success. M. Paléologue in two telegrams—which arrived at Paris at 4 P.M. and 5.30 P.M.—explained what was M. Sazonoff's idea in forwarding it.

> " My German colleague has again begged M. Sazonoff to arrest military preparations, affirming that Austria will do nothing to violate Serbia's territorial integrity. M. Sazonoff replied that it was Serbia's sovereign independence no less than her territorial integrity which it was necessary to safeguard, and that it was inadmissible that Serbia should become Austria's vassal. If Serbia were thus sacrificed, all Russia would rise against the Government. M. Sazonoff added : ' The moment is too grave for me not to tell you exactly what I think. In intervening at Petersburg while refusing to intervene at Vienna, Germany's one idea is to gain time so as to allow Austria to crush the little Serbian kingdom before Russia can come to the rescue. But the Emperor Nicholas is so desperately anxious to avoid war that I am going to make you a last proposition in his name.' M. Sazonoff then handed to Count Pourtalès the text quoted above, and Count Pourtalès promised to press the proposal on his Government. M. Sazonoff thought that Austria's acceptance would have for its logical corollary a conference of the Powers in London."

M. de Margerie's reply from the Quai d'Orsay was :

" M. Isvolsky has told me of the Russian proposal, but that it was the result of the German Ambassador's urgent request to know the precise conditions under which the Russian Government would stop arming. Whatever happens, even if the conditions formulated by M. Sazonoff do not seem, as worded, acceptable to Austria it behoves you to keep in close touch with M. Sazonoff, and without in any way traversing the English proposals, to think out with him what formula might furnish a basis for conference and adjustment."

Thus the French Government was straining every nerve to save the shred of peace still available. But at half-past eleven that evening, the Quai d'Orsay hears from Paléologue :

" M. Sazonoff this afternoon in the course of an interview with Count Pourtalès must have been convinced that Germany would not say the decisive word for peace at Vienna. The Emperor Nicholas has the same impression from an exchange of personal telegrams with the Kaiser ; moreover, the Russian General Staff and Admiralty have received very disquieting information as to German preparations by sea and land. In consequence the Russian Government has determined to put in hand at once with all secrecy the preliminaries of a general mobilisation. In letting me know this, M. Sazonoff added, that the Russian Government would not relax its conciliatory efforts and that he himself would negotiate up to the last moment." [1]

How had all this come about at St. Petersburg ? The Czar at 6.30 P.M. had received a telegram from the Kaiser :

" If Russia mobilises against Austria, my rôle of mediator which I accepted at your urgent entreaty will be compromised if not rendered impossible. The whole weight of the decision to be taken rests on your shoulders, which will have to bear the responsibility of peace or war."

But before this telegram arrived there had been a new consideration. In a morning interview with the Minister of

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[1] Later, when the Yellow Book for 1914 was being compiled, the Embassies concerned were consulted, and I suppose it was at Russia's request that the phrase as to the preliminaries of a general mobilisation were suppressed. But it occurs on the copy of the telegram which I received on the night of the 30th-31st, and I well remember how at the moment I regretted that Russia had not stuck more closely to Viviani's advice. We had, anyhow, every reason to hope that there would be no immediate official and public mobilisation. (Cf. Appuhn and Renouvin.)

Agriculture, M. Sazonoff had realised that to hang up general mobilisation might put Russia in a very awkward position if the reports from Germany became worse. A little later, in conference with the War Minister and Chief of the Staff, it was realised that the information received during the night rendered it indispensable to prepare without losing a moment for a war with the Central Powers, and consequently to revert to the larger scheme. Soukhomlinoff and Yanoushkévitch on the telephone tried to convince the Czar that it would be well for him to come back to his original decision; His Majesty refused point-blank and hung up the receiver. In desperation Yanoushkévitch got into communication again, and begged His Majesty, anyhow, to speak to Sazonoff on the instrument, and after a moment's silence the Emperor agreed. Sazonoff then begged for an audience, which the Czar gave him for that afternoon, when —accompanied by the Russian Military Attaché at Berlin, who was about to repair to his post—he represented to the Czar with all the emphasis possible the urgency of a general mobilisation in view of a corresponding step having been taken, if not already officially decreed, in Germany.[1] He wrung from the Czar his consent, and one has only to read the account of M. Schilling or M. Sazonoff himself to be assured of the more than reluctance with which the Czar gave way, and how until the last he stood firm for the possibility of peace; and suffice it to say that in the interviews which I myself had with His Majesty a few days earlier, we neither of us contemplated for a moment the sinister events nor did we discuss the more than painful matters which now hung heavy on his conscience. The Czar's consent had hardly left his lips, when Sazonoff darted to the telephone to reassure the Generals, and before six o'clock the ukase went out to the military districts.

The Russian Government must indeed have been under grave apprehension to pay such scant heed to Viviani's warning; this M. Sazonoff shows very clearly in his rather pathetic Memoir. Sazonoff had confided not only in Paléologue, but in Buchanan and Pourtalès, and it is certain that fear brooded over Russia, with the thought that she might well find herself a long way behindhand in her preparedness for war. At half-past three Baron Sverbejef, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, telegraphed to Sazonoff that the *Lokal-Anzeiger* announced German mobilisation ; this news was contradicted by Herr Jagow, a contradiction which Sverbejef at once repeated in clear and cipher. There has been much—and often rather loose—talk as to how far Russia's mind was made up by the message derived from the *Lokal-Anzeiger* ; Hollweg at the time thought it was entirely so.[1] Sir Edward Grey, two years later, declared that the *Lokal-Anzeiger* was a German trick to make Russia mobilise ; Eisner believed that the German authorities had deliberately kept back Sverbejef's second telegram, and Sazonoff himself has confirmed this idea.[2] On the other hand, Montgelas, in the *Deutsche Rundschau* (19th May 1922), is precise as to time, and is pretty sure that the contradiction of the *Anzeiger* (in clear) did not reach St. Petersburg before the Czar's final decision. Anyhow, it is seldom that there is smoke without fire, and what the *Anzeiger* put out was probably premature rather than incorrect ; and this the more so from the evidence before the Russian General Staff that Germany was about to leap to arms.

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[1] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th August 1927.

But although I can accept with a grain of salt Montgelas' dictum with regard to the *Lokal-Anzeiger*, I must protest vigorously when he reproaches the French Government with having given Russia advice as to how to begin secretly her preparations. This accusation is based on one of those messages when Isvolsky puts into people's mouths what he wants to hear. He attributed to M. Margerie and M. Messimy proposals which they never made, and which would have watered down Viviani's instructions. His telegram was circulated, after it had been sent, when Ministers were sitting on the Thursday morning, and neither Messimy nor any of his colleagues had any fault to find with it. We had simply warned Russia straight out against any step which might induce German mobilisation as a counter-stroke ; no one expected the ukase which was issued in the afternoon, and of which we knew nothing for many long hours afterwards. It must not be forgotten that Russia, while ordering mobilisation, remained perfectly willing to negotiate, and as Sazonoff said, to negotiate effectively. The Foreign Minister, at Count Pourtalès' express request, put on paper the conditions which he would accept: that Austria should recognise the Austro-Serbian conflict had assumed a complexion which concerned all Europe; that she should eliminate from her ultimatum anything which marred Serbia's sovereign rights. In return, Russia would call a halt to all military preparations and would meanwhile abstain from any unprovoked act of hostility against Austria.

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[1] German Documents.

[2] *New York Times*, 11th May 1924.

When M. Sverbejef submitted the proposal to Herr Jagow at 5 P.M., the Minister said at once Austria could not accept it. Sir Edward Grey himself did not quite like Sazonoff's draft and would substitute "if Austria, having occupied Belgrade and the neighbouring country, will pronounce herself prepared—in the interests of European peace—to stand where she is and to discuss how the question can be definitely adjusted, I hope that Russia will also consent to a discussion and to suppress any further military preparations, on the understanding that the other Powers do the same". In spite of Germany's insistence, Grey does not ask Russia to put a full stop to her preparations, only that she should suspend them when Austria herself has called a halt; Austria would have taken—and could provisionally keep—guarantees, and a conference might ensue. Russia did not say no, but Austria obstinately refused to say yes. She indignantly repudiated the formula which Grey had conceived, Hollweg had recommended, and Sazonoff had not discarded, and which, anyhow, scored a success for the Dual Monarchy. Neither Berchtold nor Hoetzendorf, nor Forgach, nor Hoyos would agree to put any term to their military operations, and when the two former saw the Emperor in the afternoon it was decided to decline any attempt at mediation.[1] Herr Hollweg, annoyed by this obstinacy, sent Tschirschky a telegram (No. 200) in which is embedded an irrefutable judgment on Austria's conduct.

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[1] Conrad v. Hoetzendorf, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit.*

> "If Austria refuses all and any concession . . . it will be scarcely possible to charge Russia with the European conflagration which may break out. . . . If England's counsel were to prevail while Vienna refuses any suggestion, Vienna thereby affirms that she is bent on a war in which we shall be implicated and of which Russia will be guiltless. The result will be a situation quite untenable for us in view of national opinion. We can only most energetically recommend Austria to accept Grey's suggestion which safeguards her at all points."

When this telegram was sent off at 9 P.M. on the 30th, Hollweg probably did not know that Russia was going to mobilise the next morning. But supposing Russia had delayed—or even had not taken—her decision, the fact would remain that Austria, after sending—with Germany's consent—an unpardonable ultimatum to Serbia, after declaring war, bombarding Belgrade and invading Serbian soil, refused to stand still, and with her eyes open exploded a mine.

After all, Germany's responsibility does not end with Austria's earlier faults, but includes the actual resistance of her Ally. While, as a matter of fact, Hollweg was urging moderation, Moltke and the Military Staff were crying for mobilisation of the whole Austrian Army, and even in the evening the militarists had to reckon with the "civilian" Chancellor, who, however, set his face not like a flint but like a pudding. Circumvented by the soldiers, the Chancellor seems to have regretted his telegram (No. 200) to Tschirschky and telegraphs afresh to him that for the moment he is not to act upon it. He thus renounces any idea of keeping Austria in check, lets her take the bit in her teeth, and behaves as if he were rather sorry for having for a moment acted reasonably. It was just now that the Bavarian Military Attaché at Berlin reported to Munich: "The Emperor evidently sees eye to eye with Moltke and the War Minister. . . . His Majesty's decision to let his own sons go to the front as simple officers has created a wonderful effect." This officer had already informed the Bavarian War Office that Moltke was doing all he could to avail himself of a particularly favourable situation to launch an attack. While the Kaiser's sons were donning their uniforms, we in Paris were striving to prevent the war which seemed every minute to be coming nearer.

At 11 A.M. of the 30th Sir Francis Bertie sent a note to the Quai d'Orsay, the weak point of which was that it was a little late. Prince Lichnowsky had been told to let Sir Edward Grey know that the German Government had been doing all it could to interpose between Vienna and St. Petersburg, "and he hopes with good success"; Austria and Russia seemed to be "in constant touch", and Hollweg was trying to prevail upon the Austrian Government to set out precisely, for the benefit of the Russian Government, the scope of their action against Serbia.

Grey had replied to Lichnowsky that a direct agreement between Austria and Russia would be by far the best way out of a great difficulty, and that so long as there was the least chance of securing this, the British Cabinet would hold up any other proposal. But later Grey had learnt that Austria had declined any overtures from the Russian Government, while Germany seemed to think that a conference, or even a Four-Power conversation, was too "formal a method". Grey lets us know that he is steadily bent on the German Government making its own proposal as to some procedure which would allow the Four Powers to forestall a war between Austria and Russia. He knew that Italy and France would be quite agreeable to this, and that mediation could be put in motion at once if only Germany would press the button; but obviously Germany would not press the button, otherwise it would have been easy for her to arrest the bombardment of Belgrade and to accept earlier, and without reservation, an honest effort to mediate. Even at this eleventh hour, if the Four Powers would meet in London, they might by their mere unity be strong enough to influence Austria and Russia alike. Why does Germany hold aloof?

M. Jules Cambon was to give us a ray of light. He had asked Herr Jagow—who is evidently much upset—if Austria had already pushed troops into Serbia; Herr Jagow knew nothing about it. "Remember," Cambon said to him, "if this news is true, Austria's prestige is no longer at stake, and she can now accept, without the slightest belittlement of her dignity, the intervention of the four disinterested Powers." "That is quite a point," Jagow replied, a remark which struck both our Ambassador and Goschen very favourably and which was reported at once to London.

At 3 P.M. we heard from Cambon :

> "Zimmermann has told one of my colleagues that the telegrams between the Kaiser and the Czar, which have crossed one another, are very cordial, but ineffective. German opinion—and especially at Hamburg—is very sceptical as regards any English intervention ; this is very dangerous. Goschen thinks that if England were openly to announce her intentions, it might make Russia more uncompromising, and good relations might be more difficult. I told him that without making a public statement, as Lloyd George did in 1911, some declaration might be made hypothecating an attack against France, either by Grey to Lichnowsky or by the British Ambassador to Jagow. Goschen is so vague that many notions are about which it is well to dispose of. The German papers, quoting the *Times*, say that England will only take such precautions as are necessary to ensure her own safety. It is possible this is said in order not to envenom the debate. But the German Government should not rely on this ; I hear that even the Russians who are in Berlin are struck with the same idea."

Happily Sir Francis Bertie came to see me this evening to bring me Sir Edward's congratulations on the success of my visit to Petersburg.[1] I told him we had heard in the night that if Russia did not stop arming, Germany would mobilise, and that this afternoon a fresh message had come from Petersburg that the German pronouncement had been modified, and for it had been substituted the question : "Under what conditions would Russia consent to demobilise?" Russia had replied : "We will demobilise if Austria will assure us that she will respect Serbia's sovereign rights, and if she will consent to submit for international discussion some of the Austrian demands inacceptable to Serbia". I told Sir Francis that I did not think the Austrian Government would accept the Russian conditions, and that I was quite sure it rested with England to preserve peace. "If His Majesty's Government would announce that, in the event of Germany and France coming to blows owing to an Austro-Serbian quarrel, England would come to the help of France, I am sure there will be no war, for Germany will at once shift her ground." Sir Francis agreed with me, although he did not say so in his telegram to Sir Edward Grey narrating our conversation. He told me quite frankly that he thought it would be very difficult for the British Government to make any such declaration. My answer was: "Yet such a declaration would be intensely favourable for peace; the last thing which France wants is war, and so far she has made no military preparations except such as are necessary not to be taken by surprise; she will keep the British Government informed as to her every movement. If there were to be a general war on the Continent, England would inevitably be in it in order to protect her own vital interests. If from to-day she were to declare her fixed determination to support France, who only wishes to keep the peace, Germany would almost certainly turn aside from her project of war." [1]

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[1] Foreign Office Documents.

To return to Germany. All this year, and especially since the 24th July, she has been the bogey of the French Government, which cannot forget Casa Blanca, Agadir, and other threats which have troubled the daily life and labour of the French people.

At four o'clock we received Jules Cambon's telegram that the Grand Duke of Hesse had started for Petersburg to see his brother-in-law the Czar, and to try and find some way out of the mess, but that meanwhile no denial or confirmation could be obtained of the report that mobilisation had been decided on and would probably be announced on the morrow; and also that the forts of Metz were being manned. Five minutes later came another telegram that the Secretary of State had telephoned to our Ambassador begging him to contradict at once the report of mobilisation, and that editions which had printed it had been suppressed. It looked very much as if mobilisation had been officially decided upon, and the German Government wanted to keep it secret so as to steal a march upon the other Powers. And if indeed the Russian General Staff—whose archives, by the way, the Soviets have never published—had, on the 29th and 30th of July, the same information which our Ambassador was sending us, one can understand that Russia dared not delay any more her mobilisation, which was a far lengthier affair than that of any other country. Jules Cambon's further telegrams left little room for doubt as to what Germany was really up to. A little after 6 P.M. we knew that, according to Zimmermann, the military were pressing for a decree of mobilisation, as any delay was a handicap to Germany, and the decree might be issued at any moment. Cambon did not know who was responsible for the bit of false news in the *Lokal-Anzeiger*, which was generally considered as an official organ—news calculated to relieve France's anxiety. He thought we ought not to publish any mobilisation measure here until after an official German decision, chiefly because English opinion, which would play so important a part in the near future, must not attribute to us any wish to fight. A quarter of an hour later came another message: "I have reason to think that everything has been done which can be done before the actual publication of general mobilisation; they evidently want us to announce mobilisation first. We must upset this calculation and not yield to the impatience which is sure to be found in Paris both in the Press and in public opinion." So all is ready at Berlin, the decree is on the eve of publication, only the Germans coolly calculate on our proclamation coming out first. We are not going to fall into this trap, which is much the same as was laid at St. Petersburg, and in which Sazonoff found himself caught.[1]

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[1] Although Sir Francis was more than doubtful as to how the British Government would view my words, Mr. Bonar Law told me later that he had said exactly the same thing to the Cabinet, and he added to me that if the English Government had decided earlier on a public pronouncement, war would doubtless have been avoided. But of course one cannot be sure whether public opinion in England would have backed a Government in a war programme before Belgium was attacked.

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[1] Meanwhile Sir Edward Grey received no answer to his message to the German Government, who alleged they were consulting Vienna. (Telegram, Jules Cambon, received 6 P.M.)

Our Ambassador, naturally very anxious as to all he heard and saw, wanted to have an answer one way or the other, and asked Herr Jagow what about the official notice in the *Anzeiger*. He was told that it was a blunder, and that wrong use had been made of paragraphs set up in view of any eventuality. He also asked what reply had gone to Sir Edward Grey's request for a German formula, and was told that Herr Jagow, to gain time, had asked Austria on what grounds she could be approached for discussion. "This reply", said Cambon, "is tantamount to the elimination of England, France and Italy, and to giving M. Tschirschky, whose Pan-Germanist feelings are well known, the task of bringing Austria to see reason. Jagow observed that the Russian mobilisation would compromise the success of the all-important intervention with Austria, and he was surprised that the Czar, after having signed it, should have telegraphed to the Kaiser to claim him as a mediator.[1] I reminded the Secretary of State of his own words that Germany would not consider herself obliged to mobilise unless Russia mobilised towards the German frontiers, and that this was not the case. He admitted this, but declared that the senior military officers insisted on immediate mobilisation owing to the danger of delay, and that what he had said to me did not constitute any firm promise. I gathered from our conversation that the chances of peace had lessened still further."

It was difficult for us to have any other impression than that which Cambon had received, the more so as the German military hand was becoming increasingly apparent towards our own frontiers. On the Cologne—Trèves line were trains with munitions for artillery; at Junkeralt, thirteen locomotives were kept under full steam; the movements of troops towards Cologne were being continued, all the bridges were held by soldiers, and from Munich came the message that all ranks of the Bavarian Army were ordered to rejoin their units at once. In the face of such information we could not stand with our eyes shut and our arms folded, and M. Messimy reminded us of General Joffre's urgency that the covering dispositions should be made without another moment's delay. This meant mobilising the 2nd, 6th, 7th, 20th, 21st commands and all the cavalry, while arranging as to transport to the frontiers for the regiments from Rheims, Châlons, Besançon, Paris, and some of the garrisons in the west. It was a serious decision to take, but the Ministers were unanimous as to shirking no really necessary precautions. But for fear Germany should exploit even this initiative in England and Italy, and try to make us look like aggressors, it was arranged that only these covering troops should take up their places who could reach them on horseback or on their feet, that the reserves should not be called up, that all harness should be bought instead of being requisitioned, and that our front line should be kept at 10 kilometres from the frontiers so as to prevent any contact between French and German patrols. This last decision has been very much discussed, and to justify it M. Messimy said : " If to-morrow I had, in analogous circumstances, to make a like decision, I should do so without a moment's hesitation, and in this respect I refer you to Viviani's admirable speech in the Chamber. Nothing has made so favourable an impression on British opinion, or proved more clearly to England how pacific were our real intentions than the order to keep our troops some little distance from the frontier." (Cf. A. Recouly.)

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[1] This refers to the earlier Russian decision regarding the mobilisation of the four military districts neighbouring on Austria. The second part of the telegram only left Berlin at 1.30 A.M. on the 31st, and arrived in Paris at four o'clock.

This arrangement, with its grave military inconveniences, showed that France at the end of July had no thought of attacking ; Joffre had agreed, only stipulating that at certain points we should throw out advance posts to act purely on the defensive. Our decision and dispositions [1] were at once made known to Sir Edward Grey, who was reminded that on the Luxembourg-Vosges front German troops were within a few hundred yards of our frontier, while ours were kept 10 kilometres away with strict injunctions not to stir further forward ; thus in rendering strips of ground liable to sudden enemy attack we showed that France, no less than Russia, was wholly irresponsible for any offensive movement.

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[1] The order ran : " Until further orders, and except in case of sudden attack, there will be no call on reservists. Troops moving by rail to their places in the covering army will hold themselves ready to entrain ; troops moving by road will without delay take up the positions assigned in case of sudden attack. Anyhow, for diplomatic reasons, it is essential that no untoward incident shall occur ; therefore no patrol, or other unit, shall under any pretext approach the frontier or overstep their own boundary. . . ."

In the evening and at night telegrams from Dumaine led one to think that after all Austria and Russia were in direct communication. M. Schebeko had been instructed to tell Count Berchtold that Russia's preparations were only in reply to those of Austria, and that the Czar had surely the right to express his opinion in what affected Serbia. Berchtold's answer was rather soothing : mobilisation in Galicia was likewise not to be interpreted in any generally hostile sense and was only intended to keep things as they were, and it had been arranged that *pourparlers* should be resumed at Petersburg between Sazonoff and Szapary. It looked as if things were settling down between Russia and Austria just when they were boiling up between Russia and Germany, and Germany was responsible for the paradox.

Dumaine wrote that his interview with Berchtold was quite friendly, and without raising actual hope, there did seem just a chance that the clash of arms might still be localised, when "at this moment comes the news of the German mobilisation". Dumaine added : "My Russian colleague recognises that the German mobilisation renders any arrangement more and more difficult. Is it possible to let the German Chancery know how grave a responsibility they are incurring in thus extinguishing the last chance of salvation ?" How could this news of German mobilisation, if it were false, have spread so rapidly in Vienna at the same time as St. Petersburg ? And why was it at once taken so seriously, not only by Schebeko, but by Germany's faithful friend Berchtold ?

Thus threatened, Viviani telephoned to Paul Cambon and urged that he should be allowed to know one way or another what England really meant to do. Our Ambassador did everything to impress upon Sir Edward Grey that from one hour to another, in spite of anything which France could say or do, war might break out, and it was imperative to discuss all its possible consequences. At half-past eleven came a telegram that Sir Edward Grey quite appreciated all our Ambassador had said, but he had not lost all hope of extrication from the tangle, and that his new idea was that Russia should recognise the occupation of Belgrade on condition that Austria should promise to evacuate it the moment some arrangement should have been arrived at. Paul Cambon himself did not think that Russia would agree to such a proposal, which was a little belated after the bombardment of the Serbian capital.

We were as much in the dark about Italy as about England ; by the agreement of 1900–1902 Italy was obliged to remain neutral if France were attacked, but she still remained the ally of Austria and Germany. Article VII. of the Triple Alliance Treaty stipulates that the contracting Powers must agree between themselves before allowing any alteration in existing conditions in the Balkans, and that if Austria were to acquire any increase of territory there, Italy would be entitled to compensation. One has learnt since the war that the interpretation of this Article gave rise to some heated words. On the 24th July the German Ambassador at Rome, Herr Flotow, telegraphed to Berlin that he had had rather a stormy interview with M. Salandra and the Marquis de San Giuliano, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The latter declared that if Austria had acted up to the spirit of the Triple Alliance she would have come to terms with Italy before taking any action so drastic and so charged with possible consequences as she had done, and that Italy, not having been informed, could not consider herself as bound in any way. The Prime Minister had gone a little further still in saying : " The text of the Austrian Note is worded so clumsily and so aggressively that public opinion in Europe and in Italy will be dead against Austria, and that public opinion will be stronger than any Government ". " Humbug ! " wrote the Kaiser on the margin of the report of this conversation. "Italy has already wanted to pick and steal in Albania, and Austria has puckered up her eyebrows . . . all this is nothing but going over the same ground, and the future will speak for itself." The German Government, less optimistic than the Kaiser, was not a little disturbed by the Italian conundrum, and tried its best to reconcile the Cabinets of Rome and Vienna. "The Chief of the General Staff considers it absolutely necessary that Italy should remain in the Triple Alliance, and an agreement between Vienna and Rome is essential." (26th July.) So ran Hollweg's telegram to Tschirschky, and the Kaiser himself had to come off his high stool and give in to the opinion of his military advisers. On the 27th Herr Jagow telegraphed to the German Ambassador at Vienna:

> "His Majesty considers it indispensable that Austria should come to some arrangement with Italy over Article VII. and in the matter of compensations. His Majesty has ordered me to communicate his instructions to Your Excellency and beg you at once to inform Count Berchtold." (*Die deutschen Dokumente.*)

Now, as Article VII. was only to come into play if Austria swelled herself in the Balkans, and it seemed probable that, despite her public pronouncement, she had every intention of so swelling herself—as Germany knew perfectly well and did nothing to oppose—the Kaiser only asked that Vienna should agree with Rome as to sharing the spoils in order that Italy, in case of a general war, should still remain within the Triple Alliance. But Italy kept her own counsel, watched and waited, and early on the afternoon of the 30th M. Barrère telegraphed to us:

> "The attitude of Italy in case of War is quite uncertain, although general opinion here is very anti-Austrian; strenuous efforts are being made by Austrians and their friends to influence the Press to counteract this feeling."

CHAPTER XIX

My position as President was just now in many respects painfully passive; I presided over Cabinet Councils, I conferred with the Ministers who came to see me and read all the telegrams and reports which they brought. But intensely loyal as all the Ministers were in letting me know everything that was going on, I felt that they were constitutionally responsible and that full freedom of action must be left to them. This only made me a prey to every emotion, and through the long hours of those long days I was constantly having to hold myself in tightly, lest I should do anything to add to the troubles of others, while over and over again I asked myself if Europe were really going to be plunged into a bloody war just because Austria was bent on noisily rattling Germany's sword.

Through the night of the 30th/31st telegrams rain in. Soon after midnight we know that while Lichnowsky could give Sir Edward Grey no reply as to the Four-Power intervention, he has questioned the Secretary of State as to the English military preparations:

> "Sir Edward Grey replied", so Paul Cambon tells us, "that these had no 'offensive' character, but as things were on the Continent it was only natural that some precautions should be taken; that in England as in France the one wish was for peace, and that if, in England as in France, defensive measures were being taken, there was nothing in this which could suggest any sort of aggression. I have told Sir Edward Grey that the German Government is going to mobilise unless Russia stops arming; Sir Edward again said that English opinion was tepid as to Austro-Russian troubles with Slavs, and he added that the moment had not yet come to contemplate any British interposition. I note that during the last few days, very

powerful German influence is being exercised in Press and in Parliament by City men who are of German origin. Several members of the Cabinet are somewhat under this influence, and it is possible that Mr. Asquith dare not as yet stick his feet in the ground. Personally he is all for intervention."

This hesitation on the part of the English may prove fatal, and seems even more deadly when in the afternoon we hear from the younger Cambon :

" The attitude of the British Ambassador here is in line with the hesitating language of Sir Edward Grey and the British Ambassador in Rome.[1] This attitude may have a terrible result, for Germans are quite hopeful as to a successful issue of their fight against France and Russia if these are unsupported. Nothing but the chance of English intervention affects the Emperor, his Government or German interests. The question of supplies is acute, and private people are laying in stores. . . ."

A little after noon Viviani, upon information both from Messimy and Joffre, telegraphs to Paul Cambon as to the German dispositions :

" 31*st July*.—The German Army has its advanced posts close up to our frontier, and yesterday German patrols twice came through on to our ground. Our advanced posts are 10 kilometres behind the frontier. The people protest against being thus left exposed to an enemy attack, but the Government is determined to let everyone know, and to let the English Government know, that anyhow France will not be the aggressor. The whole 16th Corps from Metz, reinforced by part of the 8th from Trèves and Cologne, holds the Metz-Luxembourg front. The 15th Corps from Strasbourg has closed up on the frontier, and under pain of being shot, Alsatian-Lorrainians may not pass the frontier. German Reservists are being called up by tens of thousands; this is the last stage before mobilisation, while we, on the other hand, have not called up a single Reservist. I may add that all our information points to the fact that German preparations began on the day that the Austrian ultimatum was sent."

Still the British Government does not make up its mind, and watches with a calmness, born of insularity, what is taking place on the Continent. In the morning, the Cabinet thought that for the moment it was impossible to guarantee any intervention, and expressed the intention of trying to obtain from Germany and France a promise to respect Belgian neutrality; for the rest they must wait until the situation develops before contemplating the idea of coming in.

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[1] Sir Rennell Rodd.

To read these documents is to be more than puzzled how Mr. Barnes can have seriously written in his *Genesis*:

> "Before June 1914 it was practically certain that Great Britain would come into the war alongside France and Russia against Germany."

Little less astounding is M. Albert Lombroso's effusion:

> "La guerra fu voluta e preparata, diplomaticamente e militarmente, dall' Inghilterra sin dal tempo di Edoardo VII, e la Germania fu pacifica, ma . . . non pacifista" (*L' Eziologia della Grande Guerra*).

In very truth it was not until the last moment that France knew what England would really do.

Of course on the 29th Mr. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, had warned the Fleet Commanders to hold themselves ready for battle; on the 30th the Grand Fleet was concentrated at Scapa Flow, and that day Mr. Churchill wrote confidentially to the Admiral Commanding the Mediterranean Fleet: "Our first care should be to help France to bring her troops from Africa". Nor should it be forgotten that on the afternoon of the 29th Grey declared that if Germany and France came to blows, England could not for long stand aside. But neither Grey nor Churchill had made any official promise of help, while many of their colleagues were distinctly opposed to any such idea, or, like Mr. Lloyd George, disfavoured any quick decision.

The uncertainty was so gnawing, and both Jules and Paul Cambon were so insistent as to England, and England only, being able to keep Germany in check and so prevent a fearful war, that I proposed to the Ministers I should write direct to the King. The Government cordially approved the suggestion. I knew how inflexibly correct and strictly constitutional King George had always shown himself, but I felt that if he only would forward my letter to his Ministers, their attention would be forcibly drawn to the solemnity of the step we had taken.

M. William Martin, Director of Protocols, was detailed to carry to London the letter, which ran thus :

" *31st July* 1914. CHER ET GRAND AMI—The European situation is so serious that I think it my duty to convey directly to Your Majesty the information which the French Government has received from Germany. Her military preparations, especially in the regions bordering on our frontier, are daily being increased and hastened. France is determined to do everything in her power until the last moment to preserve peace, and has only taken the precautions which are prompted by bare necessity. But her prudence and moderation do nothing to give pause to Germany ; far from it. Despite the wise counsels which prevail here, and the calm which marks public opinion, we are perhaps on the very threshold of terrible happenings. From all we can learn, it would seem that if the German Government were sure that the British Government would stand aloof from a conflict in which France might be engaged, war would be inevitable ; on the other hand, if Germany realises that, should occasion arise, the Entente Cordiale will be affirmed on the battle-field, there would be a great likelihood of peace being kept. Of course our military and naval agreements do not in any way bind Your Majesty's Government, and in the letters exchanged in 1912 between Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon, England and France simply undertake to confer together in case of any European tension and to consider as to whether there be cause for concerted action. But the intimate character which public feeling has given to the Anglo-French Entente, the mutual confidence with which the two Governments have constantly laboured for peace, the sympathy which Your Majesty has always shown for France are my plea for frankly conveying to yourself my impressions, which are those of the Government and of the whole country.

" I verily believe that the best chance of peace depends on what the British Government says and does. From the very beginning of the crisis we have urged on our Allies that attitude of moderation from which they have not departed. In full accord with Your Majesty's Government and agreeably with Sir Edward Grey's suggestion, we shall continue to act as we have already done, but if all conciliatory efforts are made on one side, and if Germany and Austria can count on England standing aloof, Austrian demands will remain inflexible and any agreement between her and Russia will become impossible. I am profoundly convinced that at this moment the more England, France and Russia give the impression of complete unity in diplomatic action, the more it may be possible still to look for the preservation of peace. Your Majesty will, I trust, graciously excuse this intrusion, which is prompted only by the earnest desire to see the balance of European Powers definitely readjusted. Je prie Votre Majesté de croire à mes sentiments les plus cordiaux. R. POINCARÉ."

Before M. Martin reached London, Cambon had sent a further set of telegrams which only increased our perplexity.

"*31st July*, 1.4 P.M.—I have let Sir Edward Grey (who is just now sitting in Cabinet) know of the telegram from our Ambassador in Berlin pointing out the dangers of the English tergiversations. Sir A. Nicolson, whom I have just seen, tells me that opinion here is beginning to be stirred, and that the postponement of the debate on Ireland shows that Parliament is alive to the gravity of the situation. I am to see Sir Edward this afternoon." (166.)

"9.44.—The German Ambassador has this morning asked Sir Edward Grey if England will remain neutral in the conflict which now seems imminent. Sir Edward replied that England could not remain neutral in a general conflict, and that if France were implicated England would be drawn in. . . . It was after this that the Cabinet conferred. Most of the Ministers thought that at the actual moment the situation was not such that would enable the Government to procure the sanction of Parliament to guarantee intervention, and that it would be better to wait for fresh developments. I asked what the British Government meant by this. Must they wait until our territory is invaded, now that all the German military dispositions point to an attack in the immediate future? The Secretary of State spoke to me of an ultimatum or something of the sort so as to create a new situation. I begged Sir Edward to submit anew to the Cabinet the points which I just made to him, and he said he would do so the moment he could be sure as to some modification in the position of affairs." (167.)

"8.42 P.M.—This modification seems to be the result of the new German dispositions taken on our frontier and of the German mobilisation which is announced. I have asked Sir Edward to make the same declaration to me as he had just made to Prince Lichnowsky. He replied that he could give me no guarantee without the authority of Parliament, but with regard to the German Ambassador, it was no question of guarantee but only of brushing away the illusions which are being made at Berlin as to what England might do. Prince Lichnowsky has received this afternoon a telegram from Berlin telling him of the Russian mobilisation, of the Kaiser's decree declaring a "danger of war", and of a communication from Germany to Russia to the effect that if within twelve hours Russian military preparations were not arrested, German mobilisation would be decreed." (168.)

"8.40 P.M.—The Cabinet will meet again to-morrow and Sir Edward Grey, who himself favours intervention, will not, I suppose, fail to renew his proposals. At the Cabinet this morning it was a question of Belgian neutrality, and telegrams have been sent to-day to the Ambassadors in Berlin and Paris to ask the Governments there for assurances on this point." (168*b*.)

While England—whom German politicians and writers have hotly accused of wanting war—was hesitating to take a definite step, and while Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey were exhausting every effort in the way of conciliation and were still refusing to despair of peace, the German waves were approaching our undefended frontiers. From Basle we hear that since the previous evening the frontiers of Alsace and Baden are closed, and that the Basle tramways go no further than the Swiss douane; that Huningue is occupied by three companies of infantry, and that the station of St. Louis is under military control, as also the Alsatian railway lines which run into it. From Luxembourg we hear that all the roads on the Lorraine side are guarded by soldiers, that on the Preisch road no automobiles or carriages are allowed to pass without search lest they should be carrying dynamite to blow up the bridges. And from Munich comes this telegram:

"In spite of the contradiction made yesterday and repeated this morning as to the mobilisation order, and in spite of the rather less disquieting news in this morning's papers, public opinion is obviously highly excited, and the belief is general that some definite decision is imminent. Officers of the Corps troops are confined to barracks, and certain points which command the Munich railways are under military charge. The banks will not accept Russian notes; in diplomatic circles there is a murmur of Germany doing something at Vienna towards a peaceful solution."

At Frankfort not only are large detachments passing through towards the frontier, but large groups of recruits have left, accompanied by their friends to the station, which is crowded. The banks are refusing cheques on Paris for fear they should not be honoured. In the afternoon we hear by telegrams from Berlin, and later through Baron Schoen, that Russia has mobilised, although in yesterday's reports, whether from Paléologue or Isvolsky, there was no question of anything further than preparatory measures. Nothing fresh has come since then, either from our own Embassy or from the Russian Embassy in Paris, and strangely enough it is only at 8.30 in the evening that a laconic message from Paléologue is handed in.

> "31st *July*. 10.45 A.M.—(318) The (word omitted) general mobilisation of the Russian Army is ordered."[1]

A like telegram sent by Pourtalès to the Wilhelmstrasse left Petersburg at 10.20 A.M. and was received at 11.40 A.M. The unusual delay in receiving Paléologue's message, which was sent through Bergen, was wholly inexplicable, and many commentators have expressed their surprise. One can only say that the fact remains, and is confirmed by the archives of the Quai d'Orsay and by Viviani's own witness. In the early hours Jules Cambon telegraphed (No. 235) that from what he heard the German Ambassador at Petersburg had telegraphed that Russia had decided on general mobilisation in response to the same decision at Vienna, and that one must look almost immediately for general mobilisation in Germany.

"In reply to general mobilisation in Austria" was what Jules Cambon said, and he thought that this was the version which the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg gave; in Paris, on receiving this rather slipshod news, we unhappily had the same impression. It was not exactly accurate, and the two decisions had been pretty nearly concomitant.

At 3.50 P.M. Jules Cambon telegraphs (No. 236):

> "The Secretary of State has just asked to see me and told me to his great regret he must let me know that owing to the mobilisation of the whole Russian Army, Germany, in the

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[1] This delay has given rise to a thousand suppositions and to some very unjust suspicions. Cf. Morhardt, *Les Preuves* and *L'École émancipée*.

The Russian mobilised first

interests of the safety of her own Empire, finds herself obliged to take serious precautionary measures. They have decided on what they call 'a threatening state of war' which allows them to proclaim, if they think well, a state of siege, to suspend certain public services, and to close the frontier. At the same time they are asking Petersburg to demobilise, without which Germany herself must mobilise her army. M. de Jagow has let me know that Baron Schoen had been instructed to inform the French Government of the resolution taken by the Berlin Cabinet, and to ask them what attitude they thought they could take up. M. de Jagow is under no illusion; he seemed to me very much agitated, and he complains bitterly of Russia's precipitate action which renders nugatory the Kaiser's mediation, which, according to him, the Czar had asked for and which Austria (word omitted) to accept. For my part I have always regretted the position that Austria took up at the beginning of the crisis."

And at 5.49 P.M.:

"The Russian Ambassador, to whom M. de Jagow has made a like communication, tells me that he has heard nothing from St. Petersburg which can lead him to believe that Russia has mobilised entirely. Further, M. de Jagow said that the Kaiser's mediation was in the way to its end, and the Ambassador asked if the Czar had been informed of this; to this he did not get a straight answer, and my colleague does not quite know what to think about what has been told him."

In all this mist of obscurity Viviani and I are astonished to have heard nothing from St. Petersburg as to the decree of this morning and can only surmise as to who had spoken the truth, the German Ambassador in Russia or the Russian Ambassador in Germany. We try to pick out from Herr Jagow's words Germany's real intention. The Minister has said: "If Russia does not demobilise, we mobilise ourselves". He has not said: "If Russia does not demobilise, we shall declare war on her". If Herr Jagow had stuck to the first plan, nobody could have blamed him, for he would merely have exercised his clear rights in replying to a general mobilisation / by a general mobilisation. And, as the Czar was begging the Kaiser, negotiations could have gone on.

But that is, of course, just what Germany did not want. At seven o'clock in the evening Baron Schoen came to see

/ But the German mobilisation starts with attacks.

Viviani, who until then had not the official news from Paléologue or Isvolsky as to mobilisation.[1] He only knew Jules Cambon's telegrams 235 and 236, and as the evening before he had urged the Russian Government not to proceed to extreme lengths, he thought that, despite contradictory information, his advice had been followed. Baron Schoen, in pursuance of his mission, said that Germany, as a set-off to the Russian decision, had thought it her duty to proclaim the *Kriegsgefahrzustand.* This would enable the Imperial Government to call into use all the rights of a "state of siege" and to close the frontier, but did not necessarily put a term to current *pourparlers.* Baron Schoen, like Herr Jagow, said nothing about declaring war on Russia if she did not demobilise; he only foreshadowed war as a possibility, and he asked Viviani whether in such an event France would remain neutral. The question had not been unforeseen, and Viviani and I had agreed that if it were put, it would be wiser not to say offhand that France would do her duty as an Ally. Every moment which did not accentuate international differences might be a moment gained—for peace. The Prime Minister simply ejaculated: "Let me hope there will be no proceeding to extremities, and give me time to think the thing over". Baron Schoen said he would come for the answer early the next afternoon; it was a thinly veiled yet quite courteous ultimatum. The Ambassador rose, and, as he took his hat, he turned round and said: "If I am obliged to leave Paris, I know you will do everything to facilitate my journey". "Of course I will," was the answer, "but it has not come to anything like that yet; the Powers are still talking the matter over, and I hope sincerely I may often have the pleasure of seeing you." The Ambassador murmured something like "Moi aussi," and then, "Monsieur le Président, will you give my respectful duty to the President of the Republic, and hand me my passports?" "No," said Viviani firmly, and then, in a softer tone, "Why must you leave us? Count Pourtalès has remained at his post, the Austrian Ambassador is here. Why announce your departure and take the responsibility without definite orders ?" The Baron only bent his head, and M. Margerie, who was present, quietly said: "You have given such proof of your desire for peace all through, your mission here must not end in bloodshed". The Ambassador bowed low, and, before leaving, repeated that he would call the next day (1st August) for an answer to his query. Directly after this rather painful interview the Ambassador sent to Berlin a telegram which we deciphered later.

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[1] Viviani, *Réponse au Kaiser.* It would seem that Isvolsky was in ignorance himself.

> "31*st July*. Reply to No. 180.—Question put at seven o'clock; the President of the Council told me that he had no news of a general Russian mobilisation but only of precautionary measures. He was therefore anxious not to give up altogether the hope of seeing these extreme measures avoided, and he promises me a reply as to neutrality by one o'clock to-morrow."

As a matter of fact, Baron Schoen had not told Viviani everything. He found the mandate which he received from Berlin so brutal in tone that he would not employ its full terms, and he did not repeat to the President of the Council the leading phrase which figured in his instruction: "Mobilisation inevitably means war". This telegram, which was also deciphered later, ran:

> "Foreign Office, Berlin. German Embassy, Paris (180). 31*st July*, 4.10.—Russia, in spite of our mediative move which is still in progress, and although we have ourselves taken no steps to mobilise, has decided to mobilise her entire Fleet and Army, which must consequently be directed against us. We have thereupon declared a state of 'danger of war', and mobilisation will follow on unless within the next twelve hours Russia suspends all hostile measures against ourselves and Austria. Mobilisation inevitably means war. Please ask the French Government if in case of a Russo-German war it will remain neutral. Reply should be given within eighteen hours; telegraph also at what hour you put the question. The utmost haste is necessary."

The rest was ciphered in a much more complicated code and the translation which our cipher clerks made later is incomplete, but such as it is, it is quite indisputable and confirmed to-day.

> "*Secret.* If . . . the French Government declares it will remain neutral, Y. E. will (tell them) that we must as (guarantee) of their neutrality ask them to hand over the fortresses of Toul and Verdun, which we shall occupy and restore after (end) of the war with Russia. Reply to this last question (should) be here before to-morrow (afternoon) four. BETHMANN-HOLLWEG."

In the French translation of the German documents this telegram is by error shown as being under date 28th July. It is of course of the 31st; it was drafted by Herr Jagow, corrected and signed by Herr Hollweg, and Baron Schoen came to the Quai d'Orsay the moment he had received it. The full text of the last paragraph as it appears in the German documents is:

> "*Secret.* If, as one can scarcely suppose, the French Government should promise neutrality, I beg Your Excellency to let them know that we must demand as a guarantee of neutrality the handing over to us of the fortresses of Toul and Verdun, which we shall occupy and will restore after the war with Russia is ended. The reply to this question should be known here to-morrow (afternoon) at four o'clock."

Such would have been the reward for, and the price of, our neutrality if we had consented to break faith with our Allies! And without doubt, after such a beginning, we should have experienced many other humiliations. We should have allowed Germany to occupy our two most important fortresses of the Est, and when she had settled her account with Russia she would have had us easily at her mercy. But Viviani could not possibly guess at what Baron Schoen had not dared to say to him.

Viviani, moreover, still refused to believe that general mobilisation had been decreed in Russia, and so surprised was he that Baron Schoen had scarcely left his room before he drafted a telegram to Paléologue:

> "The German Government, pretending that the Russian Government has ordered total mobilisation on land and water, has decided at noon to take all the military dispositions which compose what is called 'threat of war'. In communicating to me this decision at seven o'clock this evening Baron Schoen added that the Russian Government stipulated that Russia

should demobilise, and that if the Russian Government had not given a satisfactory answer within twelve hours, Germany would mobilise herself. I told the German Ambassador that I knew nothing of the alleged general Russian mobilisation which Germany invoked to justify the new military measures which she is taking to-day. Baron Schoen wound up by asking me, in the name of his Government, what France would do in case of Russo-German war; I did not answer him, and he told me that he would come for my answer to-morrow at one o'clock. I have no intention of making any pronouncement on this subject, and I shall merely say that France will be guided by her own interests.[1] The Government of the Republic surely need not tell anybody but her Ally what she intends to do. Pray communicate the above to Sazonoff and let me know at once as to the alleged mobilisation. As I have already let you know, I am sure the Imperial Government, in the higher interests of peace, will do everything to avoid any inflammation of the crisis."

As the text shows, this telegram was drafted and signed after Baron Schoen had left the room and before Viviani had any knowledge of Paléologue's telegram. Viviani's telegram had been sent to the ciphering office, and left the Quai d'Orsay in two sections at 9 and 9.30 P.M. Half an hour and an hour had elapsed before Paléologue's telegram arrived; and this had to be deciphered and taken to Viviani, who had first gone home and had then come to the Ministers' Council, and who had not time to stop his own message. However useless were his instructions now, they proved once more that France was not only ignorant of the Russian mobilisation, but that she continued to regret it and to regard it as a too precipitate move.[2]

Documentary evidence goes to prove that in Paris there was no "approval of Russian mobilisation", that we only knew of this after it had taken place, and that a few minutes before learning about it, Viviani, in full accord with his colleagues and myself, had decried it. Besides, the Council of Ministers met that evening at the Élysée.

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[1] This was the formula agreed on between him and myself.

[2] When Delbrück, Montgelas, Weber and Bartholdy alleged in May 1919 that the French Government knew of the grave measure taken at St. Petersburg, and had kept it secret as long as possible, they were very wide indeed of the truth. Still more so M. Fabre-Luce when he writes: "In 1914 the chief decision approving of the general Russian mobilisation was taken outside the Ministerial Council at a nocturnal meeting when the only persons present were Poincaré, Viviani, Messimy." (*Europe*, August 26.)

In reply to questions which were put to me in November and December 1922 by M. Buisson, then President of the League of the Rights of Man, I had fresh search made at the Quai d'Orsay, and I begged Viviani to tell me exactly what he remembered. Here is what I was able to tell my interlocutor, and what M. Herriot confirmed and completed :

M. Viviani's telegram, which appears in the Yellow Book as No. 117 and is addressed to M. Paléologue, was sent out at 9 and 9.30.

M. Paléologue's telegram arrived at the telegraph office at 8.30, whence it was sent to the ciphering office. There is no exact information as to the precise hour when the decipher was handed to the President of the Council, but it is quite certain that this only occurred after his interview with Baron Schoen, for the following reasons :

1. The German Ambassador, the moment his interview was over, informed his Government, and his telegram (237) was sent off from Paris at 8.17, that is, thirteen minutes before the arrival of M. Paléologue's telegram.

2. The text of Viviani's telegram to Paléologue was sent off at 9 and 9.30, and shows that in drafting it he had no knowledge of M. Paléologue's No. 318 announcing the general Russian mobilisation. As a matter of fact, it included the passage (suppressed in the Yellow Book) : " Please tell M. Sazonoff at once (of my interview) and let me know immediately as to the truth of an alleged general Russian mobilisation ". The President of the Council would not have written this last phrase had he known of the telegram from the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg. M. Viviani affirmed to me, and repeated at the Quai d'Orsay in 1923, that his interview with Baron Schoen was over before telegram 318 reached the telegraph office, and therefore *a fortiori* before the time when he could have received it. He gave in this declaration to the Foreign Office on the 3rd January 1923, and he adds that the interview with Baron Schoen was very short and was over by half-past seven. He left the Foreign Office about 8 o'clock

to go home, whence he repaired to the Élysée for the Council which had been convened for 9 P.M. At 9.50 came the news of the death of Jaurès,[1] and the President of the Council did not get home again until two o'clock in the morning, after having spent two hours at the bedside of the victim. Viviani added in his note that he could not remember whether, on this very agitated evening, Paléologue's telegram had been handed to him at the Élysée or later.

As a matter of fact, unless I am much mistaken, this telegram was brought to us while the Council was sitting, and, for the matter of that, only confirmed news which we had already indirectly received.

I have often asked myself how the telegram could have taken so many hours to get to us, as the Wilhelmstrasse received one so quickly, and why it was that M. Isvolsky himself seemed for so long to be in ignorance of the big decision taken by St. Petersburg. Germany certainly had no interest to keep this back, since it was she herself who let us know the news. Was it Russia who created the delay in order to prevent us from urging once more the counsel which she felt she could no longer follow ? I have no reason for thinking this, and anyhow Viviani's recommendations were delivered and renewed at St. Petersburg, and they fully expressed my own views as well as those of the Ministers.

We had many meetings during the day. When the Government knew that the proclamation of a state of " danger of war " had been issued in Germany, it met again and was informed by M. Messimy of a memorandum of General Joffre setting out the urgency of complete mobilisation of the Corps of the Est.

> " It is vitally necessary for the Government to know that every delay of twenty-four hours in calling up the Reservists and in sending the Télégramme de Couverture will have for its effect a set-back in our forward concentration, that is to say, an initial loss of 15 or 20 kilometres of territory with each day of delay. The Commander-in-Chief cannot accept this responsibility."

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[1] [M. Jean Leon Jaurès, the famous French Socialist Deputy, was assassinated by a crazy youth.—G. A.]

The Council could not remain deaf to this appeal, and about five o'clock in the afternoon decided to act on Joffre's advice.

A little later (7.30 P.M.) came the news of Austrian mobilisation from our Military Attaché.

> "General mobilisation orders have just been given to the Austro-Hungarian armies, and all men between 19 and 42 are called up. I can learn nothing of what Germany is going to do. . . ."

This first telegram, which arrived an hour before the one announcing general Russian mobilisation, was followed by another from Dumaine, which was to hand at precisely the same moment as Paléologue's.

> "VIENNA, 31*st July*, 6 P.M.— . . . My Russian colleague still believes that general mobilisation here does not exactly traverse Count Berchtold's declarations. He supposes that by pushing troops on to her frontier Austria is trying to force a localisation of the campaign, but he recognises the Vienna Cabinet runs a risk by this of provoking the very crisis which it says it wants to avoid. General opinion here is to the effect that a great flare up is imminent. . . ."

M. Dumaine does not allude to Russian mobilisation, which which as a matter of fact was not announced in Vienna when the general mobilisation was declared in Austria. Count Szapary's telegram had not arrived, and nothing was known from Petersburg.[1] On the evening of the 30th, *before knowing anything of the Russian general order*, Moltke, in the name of his General Staff, insisted on Austria mobilising immediately against Russia. "Germany herself will do the same thing," he added; Italy was to have compensations dangled in front of her and constrained to fulfil her duty as an Ally.[2] The programme of the German Generals was no less political than military, and was in opposition to Hollweg's "civilian" diplomacy. On the morning of the 31st Berchtold convened a Council and addressed them: "I have brought you together because I had yesterday the impression that Germany was wavering, but we have now a formal assurance from the highest military authority"; the order for general mobilisation which he enjoined was issued from the

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[1] Renouvin.

[2] Conrad v. Hoetzendorf, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit.*

Imperial Chancery at half-past eleven and was published at noon without a soul in Vienna knowing that Russia was standing to arms. In spite of all this arming, Sir Edward Grey and the French Government were still tirelessly striving to find a way out without bloodshed. Sir Francis Bertie sent to the Quai d'Orsay a copy of Sir Edward Grey's note to Sazonoff in which he thanked him for having renewed direct discussion with Austria; Grey had also declared to Prince Lichnowsky that unless Austria set a term to her advance along Serbian soil, he did not see how one could ask Russia to mark time in her military preparations. Sir Francis followed up this information a little later by telling us of Prince Lichnowsky's interview with Sir Edward, when he stated that the German Government was ready to intervene with the Austro-Hungarian Government, but only after the seizure of Belgrade and the occupation of the frontier districts; Germany would then ask that the Austrian Army should not advance any further. On the other hand, Germany suggested that the Powers should try and get Serbia to give really adequate satisfaction to Austria; the occupied territory would be evacuated as soon as Austria felt herself satisfied. What did this pleonasm precisely mean? And why must Austria be allowed, as a primary condition, to fill her own hands and to sit down in part of Serbia? This Germany does not explain, but Sir Edward was indeed right not to indulge in recriminations. He took things as they were, and even hoped that if Austria would call a halt, Sazonoff would consent to re-draft the formula which Russia had put out with respect to Serbian sovereignty.

Viviani, like myself, at once fell in with Sir Edward's new idea, and he begged M. Paléologue to insist on M. Sazonoff's inducing the Russian Government to adopt the British proposal. The telegram, which took a long time to encipher, was sent off from Paris just when Baron Schoen was paying his visit to Viviani.

As if to justify our efforts, a last hope seemed to shoot out in the evening from St. Petersburg. A little before 11 P.M. came a telegram from Paléologue that the German Ambassador had asked for and had been granted an immediate audience with the Czar, and had let Sazonoff think that Austria might still agree to refer her Serbian quarrel to the Powers. In the early hours of the morning comes another telegram from St. Petersburg, sent out at 7.30 P.M. of the 31st by Paléologue:

> "The Kaiser has telegraphed this morning to the Czar to guarantee that Austria will show herself conciliatory if Russia brings to an end her military preparations, and it was to confirm this telegram that the Ambassador asked for an audience with the Czar. After seeing Count Pourtalès the Czar telegraphed to the Kaiser thanking him for his intervention, which 'opens a possible door to peace.' He added that technical considerations did not permit of mobilisation being suddenly stopped, and that further this mobilisation was solely the sequel of the earlier Austrian mobilisation and implied no aggressive intention on the part of Russia; he finally gave his word of honour that the Russian Army would not attack Austria so long as negotiations between St. Petersburg and Vienna were not broken off."

And almost simultaneously:

> "Agreeably with the wish of my British colleague, Sazonoff will modify his formula thus: 'If Austria agrees that her troops shall make no further advance on Serbian territory, and if, recognising that the Austro-Serbian quarrel has assumed a character which touches the interests of all Europe, she will be willing that the Great Powers shall confer as to what satisfaction Serbia shall give to the Austrian Government without violating her sovereign rights and her independence, Russia will undertake to maintain her waiting attitude."

So once more, and in spite of general mobilisation, Russia shows herself quite ready to parley. A little before three in the afternoon the Czar telegraphed to the Kaiser:

> "So long as the *pourparlers* go on with Austria on the subject of Serbia, my troops shall do nothing which is in any sort of way of a provocative character. As to this I give you my solemn word of honour."[1] (*Die deutschen Dokumente*, 487.)

Less than an hour after, Hollweg, who of course then knew nothing of the Czar's assurances, telegraphed to Pourtalès:

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[1] In all telegrams between the Kaiser and the Czar the *tutoyer* is still used.

"If within twelve hours Russia does not stop arming against us and Austria, and does not notify this in writing, general German mobilisation will be declared."

Count Pourtalès received this threat some time after 11 P.M., and delivered it to Sazonoff as the clock was striking midnight. Russia was thus warned that at noon on the 1st of August German mobilisation would be proclaimed, but mobilisation, even in Germany, cannot be done in a day, and Russia might still think that the gate was not yet slammed on negotiations.

At Paris the evening was full of the unforeseen, and at the Quai d'Orsay things were heard of which I myself did not hear till much later. Late in 1920, M. Basch told me of an incident, seemingly grave, which had been discussed at the Société d'Études Documentaires and referred to the Central Committee of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme. It was a question of an alleged intervention by M. Lardy, the Swiss Minister, which might have gone far to keep the peace if France had not turned it down. The culprit was said to be M. Philippe Berthelot, and it was amiably suggested that he was instigated by myself. On making inquiry Berthelot sent me two pencilled notes which he had made on the evening of the 31st July:

"11 P.M.—Visit of M. Veznitch. He was told by the Roumanian Minister who had dined at the Union Club with Count Szecsen that he had asked the Ambassador why Austria had not answered the English proposal forwarded by Germany, and that Count Szecsen had said that Austria need not reply to any Power unless addressed on behalf of Serbia, in which latter case the answer would be given."

"11.15 P.M.—Count Szecsen calls and says that as Viviani has often asked what Austria wants, the Ambassador has told Count Berchtold this and has been instructed to say that the Austrian Government has declared at St. Petersburg it has no appetite for territorial possessions and will not infringe any sovereignty; that it has no intention of occupying the Sanjak, but that these declarations of disinterestedness are only good if the war remains localised, the eventualities of a European war being impossible to limit. Count Szecsen added, speaking for himself, that it was still possible to come to terms, as mobilisation was not war and some days were left available for *pourparlers*, and that it behoved

Serbia to ask Austria what conditions she would impose. Replied, quite privately, that it was rather late in the day."

However thin the shred of hope which this conversation suggested, Berthelot telegraphed an account[1] of it to Petersburg, Vienna and Rome at six o'clock the following morning, and added that the few words which the Austrian Ambassador himself dropped, left the impression he did not consider some conciliation as altogether impossible;—that what he had heard from M. Isvolsky somewhat deepened that impression.

"It seems, then," he concluded, "that since the Russian Government accepts the British proposal (which implies the arrest of everybody's military preparations) peace might, even at this eleventh hour, be kept if at Berlin the desire for peace is really sincere."

Berthelot, in his letter to me of 12th December 1920, repeated that a scrutiny of his dossier shows clearly that not the slightest chance of avoiding or retarding war had been neglected by any of us, and the last document on this dossier was a letter written by Count Szecsen to M. Margerie at midnight on the 31st July, half an hour after he had left Berthelot.

"DEAR M. MARGERIE—On coming home I find a telegram from Count Berchtold which tells me that in view of the Russian mobilisation on our frontier, we are obliged to take like measures in Galicia. These measures are purely defensive in character, and we regret to be compelled to take them, as we have no hostile intentions towards Russia and only desire to continue good relations. The *pourparlers* between Vienna and Petersburg continue quite amicably, and will, we hope, contribute to soothe things. I think this will interest you.—Y^{rs} sincerely, SZECSEN."

"It would seem", Berthelot wrote to me, "that the Austrian Government, which had blindly unchained the dogs of war and had refused until the last hour any sort of reconciliation, when that war became inevitable had a moment's hesitation in view of the future. But Germany, who had ostensibly taken things into her own hands, had no further use for vague *pourparlers* between her Ally and Petersburg, and hurried on the declaration of war. No French politician or official can have the least sense of self-reproach for having neglected any opportunity of keeping peace.

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[1] The conversation was fully reported.

Who indeed would have dared to take the responsibility of a war so terrible for the very existence of France? One need only have one's eyes open to see that nobody here believed in, or thought of, war in July 1914."

The matter which, on this frightful 31st of July, aggravated all our anxieties, was the thought of the effect which Germany's military movements would have in Belgium and Luxembourg. Belgium, of course, did not know, and would not know for many a long day, that on the 26th of July—when Viviani and I were on the high seas—the ultimatum which she was to receive was being prepared by Germany. It was drafted on that day by Moltke, and having been a little touched up by Stumm and Zimmermann, and revised by the Chancellor, was sent in a sealed packet by Herr Jagow to the German Minister in Belgium with instructions not to open it until he should receive a telegraphic order to do so.[1] This order was not given to Herr Below-Saleske until the 2nd of August. But on the 26th of July there was secretly prepared the false accusation as to the French Government penetrating Belgian territory, as also the cynical declaration that

"Germany has in view no sort of hostile act against Belgium. If Belgium consents, in the war which is imminent, to adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards Germany, the German Government not only undertakes, when peace is signed, to guarantee her all her possessions in their entirety but also to consider in the most generous way any claims which she may make for compensation, from French territory."

When on the 2nd of August Germany sent her Minister the order to present this ultimatum, she took two precautions. She suppressed the last phrase, fearing no doubt to give an even greater shock to Belgian national conscience, and she gave the hypocritical recommendation :

"The Government to which you are accredited should believe that these instructions have only reached you to-day."

But in a drawer at the German Legation there had for a week been lying the German ultimatum, and the crime committed was wholly premeditated.

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[1] Kautsky.

Without knowing anything of these suspicious combinations, Belgium, jealous of her independence, was becoming more and more anxious as to her neutrality, and on the 31st July our Minister at Brussels, M. Klobukowski, wrote to Viviani :

> " The news announcing that the German Emperor has declared ' a state of danger of war ' has produced an effect here which is all the more acute because the telegrams this morning faintly suggested a return to better relations. M. Davignon [1] asks me if the French Government will take corresponding steps, and it seemed to me quite opportune to tell him that I could, without any express mandate, give him the positive assurance that our Government would under no conditions be the first to violate Belgian territory. He replied that his Government, entirely believing in France's friendly feelings, always thought this would be so. He thanked me very warmly, and the Russian and British Ministers have also told me how glad they are that I have given this assurance to the Foreign Minister here." (*Souvenirs*.)

That evening our Minister telegraphed that the Belgian Government, as a matter of prudence, had also decided to mobilise.

Luxembourg was no less uncomfortable, and everyone there was sure that in decreeing the *Kriegsgefahrzustand*, Germany had mobilisation in hand. The trains to Metz were stopped, and M. Eyschen, the State Secretary, came to beg our Minister—M. Mollard—to ask his Government for an official assurance that France would respect the neutrality of Luxembourg in the event of war. " Have you received a like declaration from the German Government ? " was Mollard's pertinent question. So far M. Eyschen had not received this ; he repaired to the German Legation and came back to tell Mollard that he had complained to the German Minister of the very odd things which Germany was doing as against a neutral neighbour,—such as bridges on the Moselle barricaded, all corn, cattle and automobiles being forbidden to leave Germany. The German Minister had promised that circulation of vehicles should be allowed by day but forbidden by night, " and as to neutrality," he said, "that speaks for itself, but the French Government must undertake the same thing."

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[1] Minister for Foreign Affairs.

We hastened to give the same promise to Luxembourg as to Belgium, having no notion of invading neighbouring territory, and our armies still resting ten kilometres this side of our frontier.

At the Council in the evening, as some set-off to the sinister news of the Austrian and Russian mobilisations, we had a telegram from M. Barrère. The Marquis de San Giuliano had confided to him under the seal of strict secrecy that Italy would consider Austria's attack on Serbia as an act of aggression which freed her from her Triple Alliance obligations which were undertaken from a purely defensive angle, and which were perfectly reconcilable with our agreement of 1902. The Italian Minister added, with a subtlety worthy of M. Tittoni, that Italy's inaction would, of course, be subject to the prudence which France and Russia would show. It was during our session that we heard the news of the assassination of M. Jaurès. The great Socialist orator had for the last week been entirely sympathetic to the Government, had warmly commended all that Viviani had done, and had left no room for doubt that his generous and patriotic spirit would have been of infinite value to us in the dark days of war.

Saturday, the 1st of August.—The British Government still seems very slow in making up its mind. If England had spoken a little sooner and a little louder, and had said clearly from the beginning that she would not suffer an attack on France, Germany might surely have made herself felt in Austria. This is a question which we could not help putting to ourselves after all that the Cambons had told us; but Sir Edward Grey has done all he can for us without breaking up his Cabinet, and has now spoken in very straight terms to Lichnowsky.

"Sir Edward Grey has told me", so runs Paul Cambon's telegram received this morning, "that Lichnowsky has asked him if England will be neutral in the conflict which is at hand. Grey replied that if the war became general, England could not remain neutral, and especially if France were implicated, England must surely be drawn in. I asked Sir Edward as to what took place in Cabinet this morning [31st July], and he told me that for the moment the Government could not guarantee intervention, that it was intended to obtain from Germany and France an undertaking to respect Belgian neutrality, but that they must wait for the situation to develop before going any further. It is believed that a war will embroil European finance, that England herself is on the eve of an unprecedented commercial and financial crisis, and that only her neutrality can prevent a complete ruin of European credit. The Cabinet cannot commit Parliament without having consulted it ; the question of Belgian neutrality may be an important factor, and it is probably as to this that the two Houses will first question the Ministers. Some new development must be awaited, as the dispute between Russia, Austria and Germany is in regard to a question of no interest for Great Britain. I asked Sir Edward Grey if the British Government was going to wait until French territory was invaded before intervening, and I suggested that intervention might then be very belated. He answered that if France were to receive an ultimatum or some threatening communication, it might well be a peg on which the Government could propose to the Houses of Parliament the necessity of coming in. I said that the measures already adopted by Germany towards our frontier showed clearly that aggression was in the immediate future, and that if England stood aloof she would renew her mistake of 1870 when she did not perceive the danger of an all-powerful Germany in the centre of Europe. To-day, I said, the error would be worse, for England, facing all alone an all-conquering Germany, would find herself in a condition of dependence. I also said that in France everyone counted on England's support, and that if she failed in this, the advocates of an entente with Germany, and with England left out in the cold, would be justified in their views. I begged Sir Edward to put the matter before the Cabinet again, which he promised to do with the least change in the situation. Sir A. Nicolson, whom I saw in the passage, told me that the Cabinet would meet to-morrow (1st August), and whispered that Sir Edward would without doubt bring the subject up again. I have arranged for the President's letter to be taken to the Palace to-night, and I have no doubt but that its influence will be of the happiest."

At eleven—two hours before the appointment—Viviani was called out of the Presidential Council to go to the Quai d'Orsay where Baron Schoen was waiting for his answer. Viviani again simply said that France would be guided by her own interests. "My question is rather naïve," the Ambassador admitted, "and you have a treaty of alliance." "Certainly," said Viviani, upon which Baron Schoen seemed better satisfied, and did not ask for his passports. Quite a pleasant conversation ensued, in which Viviani asked what was the object of the German ultimatum, which might upset everything. The Ambassador professed himself ignorant as to recent *pourparlers* ; he insisted on how fond he was of France, and said he would do all he could to save the situation. Viviani came back to us evidently a little easier ; I wished I could feel the same, but felt rather that Baron Schoen had not paid two visits to the Quai d'Orsay merely to get a " put off " answer.

There comes a note from Joffre :

> " Germany by virtue of the *Kriegsgefahrzustand* can, and assuredly will, proceed to complete mobilisation. I repeat ", said the Generalissimo, " that if the Government postpones the order for our general mobilisation, I cannot accept responsibility for the duties with which I am entrusted."

Joffre appears before the Ministers, as calm as he is determined,—his one fear lest France should fall irremediably behindhand as compared with Germany. We can only accept his judgement and arrange to issue our general mobilisation order at 4 o'clock.

The Council was scarcely over when a wire from Paléologue gave proof that we could not delay our call to arms. " The German Ambassador has just told the Russian Government that general mobilisation will take place in Germany to-morrow " (1st August). This decision was then taken in Berlin yesterday, while we were holding back ours. But Paléologue was short of the whole truth, for Isvolsky now tells Viviani that Pourtalès announced to Sazonoff at midnight that if within twelve hours Russia did not begin to demobilise towards Austria as well as Germany, then Germany would mobilise. In other words, Russia is summoned to demobilise altogether. " Does this mean war ? " queried Sazonoff. " No, but we are very near it," was the answer.

German mobilisation had been promised to Austria, promised when the *Kriegsgefahrzustand* was proclaimed by a message from the Kaiser to the Emperor :

"31*st July*, 4.30.—The preparatory measures which I have ordered to-day will be followed up as quickly as possible by the mobilisation of all my land and sea forces. I suppose the 2nd August will be the first day of our mobilisation, and I am ready—agreeably with my undertakings as an Ally—to start war at once against Russia and France."[1]

At 5.30 back comes Baron Schoen, but only to read to Viviani a telegram from Hollweg which left Berlin at 1.5 A.M.:

"Your Excellency can give the French Government a further delay of two hours—till 3 o'clock French time—to reply to our contingent proposition."

The contingent proposition included not only neutrality but the handing over of the fortresses. It was past the hour named even before Baron Schoen had the telegram, and he could even now only telegraph back that Viviani adhered to his formula, and that the mobilisation order—as would be seen in the proclamation—had no aggressive purport; that the path was still open to consider the British proposal which France cordially endorsed, and that ten kilometres lay between the French troops and the frontier. No one who knows Viviani can have any doubt as to the sincerity of his declarations; he refused to believe a definite rupture was really at hand, and clinging to his belief, for fear of any untoward incident, he arranged in Council that, despite the mobilisation order, the advanced troops should stand fast. As de Messimy feared there might be some misunderstanding, he telegraphed—on my behalf—to the General Staff that for diplomatic reasons the line indicated must on no account be crossed, and that this applied to cavalry as to other arms:

"No patrol, reconnaissance or other detail shall go east of the line laid down. Anyone guilty of doing so will be liable to Court-martial, and only under a determined hostile attack can this order be set aside."

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[1] M. Grelling has by exhaustive analysis of dates, etc., shown that the Russian mobilisation was not the cause either of the Austrian or German call to arms, but simply served as a pretext for the instigators of war at Berlin. *La Campagne "innocentiste" en Allemagne et le traité de Versailles*, French text translated from German by Louis Moreau. *Vide* specially chapter xv.

We were as anxious that no risk should be attached to the military measures we were forced to take as that no false complexion should be given to them in the eyes of the world ; Viviani, therefore, quickly drafted a manifesto which, after some slight verbal alteration by myself, was placarded in every village :

" For some days past European conditions have grown graver, and despite all diplomatic efforts the political skies are very dark at this present moment. The majority of nations have mobilised their forces, and even the countries protected by their neutrality have taken this step as a matter of precaution. Certain Powers, whose constitutional and military usages are unlike ours, have—without actually issuing the decree—made preparations which are practically the equivalent of mobilisation and only anticipate its accomplishment. France, who has constantly affirmed her peaceful intent and has made effort after effort to keep the peace, who has in these dark days advised, and practised, moderation, must now take such dispositions as are indispensable to safeguard national territory. This cannot be legally done without a decree of mobilisation ; the Government would be untrue to the trust reposed in it if it were to allow things to remain as they are, and it has therefore made the proclamation which the situation necessitates. Mobilisation is not war, and as matters stand to-day it may be the best means of securing an honourable peace. Steadfast in its desire to arrive at a peaceful solution of the crisis, and secured by the precautions now being taken, the Government will continue to make every diplomatic effort, and is not hopeless as to the result. The French Government relies on the *sang-froid* of a great nation not to give way to any undue excitement ; it appeals to the patriotism of all France in the certainty that there is not a single Frenchman who is not eager to do his duty. At this juncture there is no political party ; there is only one France, imbued with the sense of right and justice, as peaceful as she is resolute, and united in perfect calm, constant vigilance and dignity."

As England must not misinterpret what we must do, Paul Cambon was asked to remind Sir Edward Grey that our mobilisation decree was essential for our national safety, that France would continue her counsel of prudence which had not fallen on deaf ears (for Sazonoff had—among other attempts at conciliation—urged Serbia to yield any point not incompatible with her sovereignty, had got into direct touch with Austria, and had been willing to refer all differences to disinterested Powers), that in the midst of the *pourparlers* had come the Austrian and Russian arming to which Germany had followed suit, and that then, but only then, we had been compelled to take the same precautions as other countries had done, but that we would still strain every nerve to try and ward off war.

Hesitation and differences of opinion in the British Cabinet continued. Paul Cambon telegraphed he had pointed out to Grey the new situation which had arisen, both out of the Schoen message and Germany's aggressive movements towards our frontier:

> " I told Sir Edward that this very evening diplomatic relations might be broken off between Paris and Berlin, that we were exposed to invasion on land and to naval attacks on our coasts, the latter the more dangerous because, in accordance with our agreement with England, we had concentrated the bulk of our naval forces in the Mediterranean. The Secretary of State replied that as Germany had claimed and had been refused British neutrality, the British Government was free to do what it thought right, and that if it did not favour the landing of English troops on the Continent—which public opinion might frown on—there were other ways in which intervention might be justified."

So on the evening of this 1st of August England has not decided to take her part, and if she does, it seems as if it would not be on land. If it were only a question of Asquith, Churchill and Grey, everything would be well, but more and more do these Ministers seem to have to reckon with the opposition of some of their colleagues.

Meanwhile Dumaine telegraphs that it looks as if the German Chancellery had taken Austro-Hungarian policy in hand; as a matter of fact it was not the Chancellery but the General Staff which had assumed charge. It will be remembered that a little before midnight on the 30th, Hollweg had telegraphed to Tschirschky not to communicate to Vienna the advice as to going slow which had been previously sent, and the field had been thus left open to Moltke. On the 31st the Vienna Cabinet met to consider Grey's proposal, and refused to do anything to check the invasion of Belgrade. The Emperor telegraphed to the Kaiser :

> “ A new rescue of Serbia by Russian intervention would entail very serious consequences to my States, and it is therefore impossible for me to countenance such an intervention ; I know exactly what my resolution involves.”

Count Berchtold also said outright that to break off hostilities against Serbia was impossible, and that to accept the English suggestion would be to have had all the trouble for nothing ; Serbia must be finished with once and for all.

The benevolence of Sir Edward Grey is not proof against the malevolence of Austria. From Berlin Jules Cambon warns us that there are special editions of the newspapers announcing that the 2nd August will be the first day of the general mobilisation of the Fleet and Army. The stubborn refusal of Vienna, the menacing movements of troops, do nothing to discourage either England or France in a final “try” to stave off the horrors of war. Latish in the evening Sir Francis Bertie asks for an audience and brings me a copy of the telegram which his Sovereign has just penned to the Czar :

> “ My Government has just received the following declaration from the German Government : ‘ On the 29th July the Czar asked His Majesty the Emperor by telegraph to mediate between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The Emperor at once declared his readiness to do so ; he so informed the Czar by telegram, and immediately took the necessary steps at Vienna. Without waiting for the result Russia then mobilised against Austria-Hungary, whereupon the Emperor at once informed the Czar that such action rendered his mediation illusory ; the Emperor further requested the Czar to stop the military preparations against Austria. This was, however, not done. The German Government nevertheless persevered with their mediation at Vienna. In putting forward the urgent proposals that she did, the German Government went to the utmost extreme possible with a sovereign state which is her ally. The suggestions made by the German Government in Vienna were entirely on the lines of those put forward by Great Britain, and the German Government recommended them for serious consideration at Vienna. While the deliberations were taking place, and before they were even terminated, Count Pourtalès announced from St. Petersburg

the mobilisation of the whole Russian army and fleet. This action on the part of Russia rendered any answer by Austria to the German proposal for mediation impossible. It also affected Germany whose mediation had been solicited by the Czar personally. We were compelled, unless we wished to abandon the safety of the Fatherland, to answer this action, which could only be regarded as hostile, with serious counter measures. We could not idly watch Russia mobilising on our frontier. We therefore told Russia that if she did not stop her warlike measures against Germany and Austria-Hungary within twelve hours we should mobilise, and that would mean war. We asked France whether in a Russo-German war she would remain neutral.' I cannot help thinking that some misunderstanding has produced this deadlock. I am most anxious not to miss any possibility of avoiding the terrible calamity which at present threatens the whole world. I therefore make a personal appeal to you to remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred, and to leave still open grounds for negotiation and possible peace. If you think I can in any way contribute to that all-important purpose, I will do everything in my power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations between the Powers concerned. I feel confident that you are as anxious as I am that all that is possible should be done to secure the peace of the world."

The Czar was even a little ahead of King George, as in the afternoon he had telegraphed to the Kaiser :

" I have had your telegram ; I understand that you are obliged to mobilise, but I want you to promise me what I have promised you, that these measures do not mean war, and that we can continue to treat for the welfare of our two countries and for the peace which is so near to our hearts. Our long friendship will—with God's help—prevent bloodshed. I am entirely confident as to this and eagerly await your answer."

While I was reading to Viviani King George's telegram, the Austrian Ambassador was telling Sazonoff that his Government would agree to discuss with the Powers the basis of the ultimatum to Serbia. Sazonoff gladly caught at this rather belated offer, and asked that England should " take charge " and that anyhow Austria should break off her operations in Serbia ; the latter was precisely what Austria would not do.

Jules Cambon, who had heard of this proposal through his Russian colleague, telegraphed to us that it was pretty useless after the German ultimatum, and that Austria might only be playing a game so as to make Russia responsible for the war. Late at night Sir Edward Goschen made an appeal to Herr Jagow's human feelings, only to be told that the thing had gone too far and that one must await Russia's reply to Germany, which reply would involve Russia's demobilisation towards Austria as well as towards Germany, a concession which the British Ambassador thought Russia could scarcely make. Jules Cambon was fairly sure that Germany, by butting in just when some sort of Russo-Austrian agreement was being made possible, showed that she was really out for war. Nor would Herr Jagow commit himself even as to Belgian neutrality; "I shall take my orders from the Emperor and the Chancellor," was his reply to Goschen's request for an assurance on this point. "I doubt if we can give an answer, as Germany cannot disclose her military plans." This shuffling was not good enough for England, and Sir Edward Grey asked in Cabinet for authority to say in the House of Commons on the Monday following that His Majesty's Government would not permit any violation of Belgian neutrality.

Towards six in the evening the neutrality of Luxembourg was violated (at the village and station of Trois-Vierges) by a German detachment of infantry under Lieutenant Feldmann; this officer ordered a telegraphic apparatus to be destroyed, and with a good deal of bluster announced that the German Army was marching on the town of Luxembourg.[1]

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[1] *L'Indépendance Luxembourgeois,* 1st August 1924. Confirmed by M. Thiry, then stationmaster.

CHAPTER XX

Night of 1st/2nd August. A little before midnight, Isvolsky comes to the Élysée and begs to see me at once. I rise from my bed on which I have thrown myself for a few hours' sleep, and find the Ambassador terribly agitated and terribly depressed. " Germany has declared war on Russia. It is my duty, M. le Président, to ask you one simple question : ' What is France going to do ? ' " As he stood there nothing could be less like the legendary picture which has so often been drawn of him since his death ; far from congratulating himself on what has been called " his " war, he is aghast ; Germany has suddenly taken a step from which there can be no going back. For a moment my chief thought, of course, is not what Russia, but what France will do. I can only tell Isvolsky that I will call the Ministers together immediately, and that they will surely fulfil our alliance obligations, but it might be better for us to mark time for a day or two, partly because we ought to be a little more ahead with our mobilisation before throwing down the glove, and partly because it would be better for Germany to declare war on us than for us to declare war on Germany. The Ministers were quickly at the Élysée, and during their long session, telegrams were dropping in from Petersburg. Paléologue told us that Buchanan was to have an immediate audience with the Czar, and that he was conferring with his colleague and Sazonoff as to what answer it would be wise to send to King George's appeal : and added

" I have insisted that the Czar should repeat, and emphasise, the declarations he made in his personal telegram to the Kaiser, and that he should ask King George to confirm, if not guarantee, the sincerity of these. The Czar's reply must leave no shadow of doubt as to his will to save peace; on his answer may well depend whether England does or does not take sides against Germany."

Then at half-past four comes the message to tell us that, in spite of the declaration of war, the Czar has sent for Buchanan, and finally, that the German Ambassador has handed to Sazonoff the declaration of war.[1]

For the moment we only knew the bare fact, and it was only much later that we learnt how it arose. Hollweg, Falkenhayn, Moltke and Tirpitz had discussed whether they should forthwith declare war on Russia or restrict themselves at first to general mobilisation or invade Russian territory without any preliminary declaration. They eventually plumped for a declaration of war. Two drafts of the declaration were made, one or other of which was to be handed by Pourtalès to Sazonoff at five o'clock P.M. (Russian time) according as to whether Russia had replied in the negative to the ultimatum or had given no answer at all. The Ambassador only received his instructions at 5.45 P.M. (Russian time); he was unable to get the telegram deciphered for an hour, and in his confusion at being behindhand, he gave Sazonoff a copy in which both drafts appeared. A still more singular occurrence was that some hours after the declaration of war the Czar had a telegram from the Kaiser which ran:

> "Yesterday I let your Government know of the only way in which war could be avoided. Although I asked for a reply by noon to-day, no telegram has reached me conveying your Government's answer. I have therefore been obliged to mobilise my army . . . in fact I beg you to give an immediate order that your troops shall not, under any pretext whatever, do anything to violate our frontiers."[2]

In the White Book this telegram was wrongly dated for 10.45 A.M. on the 1st August, whereas it was really 10.45 P.M. that the Kaiser signed and sent it off. He knew when he did this that Pourtalès had already handed in the declaration of war. Why did the Kaiser pen the telegram as if he did not know that it was all up? Was it to make a good entry in the White Book, as Paléologue supposes, or had he a little lost his head, or—as the Czar himself thought when he received the telegram—was he setting a trap for his cousin, and trying to make him do something both mean and ridiculous?

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[1] This telegram, although sent off earlier, did not arrive until after the message as to the British Ambassador's audience at Peterhof.

[2] Cf. Correspondence between William II. and Nicholas II. published by the Soviets.

Sunday, 2nd August.—If Germany is at war with Russia, she is not so with us, yet night and day our frontiers are violated, and Viviani telegraphs to Jules Cambon:

"German troops having crossed our frontier of the Est at several points, I beg you to lodge a protest in writing and without any delay to the German Government. You will take as your text a Note which I have sent to the German Ambassador here, as communication between Paris and Berlin is so uncertain.

"'The administrative and military authorities report several incidents which I have ordered our Ambassador to bring to the notice of the Imperial Government.

"'At Delle, in Belfort, the French custom-house has been twice fired on.

"'North of Delle two German patrols of the 5th Chasseurs have crossed the frontier this morning and penetrated to the villages of Jonchéry and Baron ten kilometres further; the officer who commanded the first patrol blew out the brains of a French soldier. The German horsemen have taken away horses which the French Mayor of Suarce was collecting, and compelled the villagers to lead the horses.

"'The French Ambassador at Berlin has been instructed to protest formally against incidents which constitute an organised violation of the frontier by German armed troops, and which there is nothing in present circumstances to justify. The French Government must regard the Government of Germany as entirely responsible for these acts.'" (Cf. Puaux, *Mensonge du* 3 *août.*)

At many other points, however, German patrols, both infantry and cavalry, seem to take pleasure in marching across our ground, and Viviani protests again to Baron Schoen, who, with his usual loyalty, warns the Berlin Government that these occurrences were inflaming French opinion.

In face of the shameless repetition of these insults, it was impossible for the French Government not to think that a general *mot d'ordre* was obviously responsible. The German General Staff pretended there was nothing in it, and that only on the 3rd of August (which they admitted was before the declaration of war) scouts had been allowed to cross the frontier. The synchronism of these incursions precludes the suggestion of sporadic incidents and one of the German cavalry captured at Jonchéry stated that the Captain had said to his men : " Orders to cross the frontier ". The mobilisation papers of the 29th Cavalry Brigade intimated that there would at once be reconnaissance on French territory.

In view of these systematic incursions General Joffre now asked us to cancel the order as to the 10-kilometre line. The Government waited a few hours before agreeing, and it was not until the afternoon that the restrictions were cancelled and complete liberty as to movements of troops was accorded to the Commander-in-Chief. Even then the General, in issuing his orders that evening to the Army Commanders, added that for reasons alike national and diplomatic, it was imperative to leave to Germany the entire responsibility for hostilities, and therefore until further orders the advanced troops must do nothing except repulse any enemy attack across the frontier without pursuit and without encroaching on German soil.

We heard that in the morning German troops had penetrated the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg by the Wasserbillig and Remich bridges, and that the capital was their objective. The leader of the Government laid a protest with the Powers against this grave violation of a country's neutrality, but the Government of Berlin, under a twinge of conscience, instructed Baron Schoen to bring us an ambiguous note, in which it was gravely said that what German troops had done in Luxembourg did not constitute any act of hostility and was only calculated to protect the railways which it was pretended had been placed under German administration.

We hasten to let Sir Edward Grey know about this, but the mills of the British Cabinet continue to grind slowly. Immediately on his return from London M. Martin brings me the King's answer, which was written out in his own handwriting and contained no positive assurance. Tied as he was by the rules of the British Constitution, the Sovereign was obliged to keep within the borders which his responsible Ministers had traced for him. His letter ran :

His Majesty King George to the President of the French Republic.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, *August* 1, 1914.

" DEAR AND GREAT FRIEND,

" I most highly appreciate the sentiments which moved you to write to me in so cordial and friendly a spirit, and I am grateful to you for having stated your views so fully and frankly.

" You may be assured that the present situation in Europe has been the cause of much anxiety and preoccupation to me, and I am glad to think that our two Governments have worked so amicably together in endeavouring to find a peaceful solution of the questions at issue.

" It would be a source of real satisfaction to me if our united efforts were to meet with success, and I am still not without hope that the terrible events which seem so near may be averted.

" I admire the restraint which you and your Government are exercising in refraining from taking undue military measures on the frontier and not adopting an attitude which could in any wise be interpreted as a provocative one.

" I am personally using my best endeavours with the Emperors of Russia and of Germany towards finding some solution by which actual military operations may at any rate be postponed, and time be thus given for calm discussion between the Powers. I intend to prosecute these efforts without intermission so long as any hope remains of an amicable settlement.

" As to the attitude of my country, events are changing so rapidly that it is difficult to forecast future developments ; but you may be assured that my Government will continue to discuss freely and frankly any point which might arise of interest to our two nations with M. Cambon.

" Believe me,
" M. le Président,
" (Signed) GEORGE R.I."

Paul Cambon, thus invited to treat further with Sir Edward Grey, reminded him that by the Treaty of London of 1867 Great Britain and Prussia had guaranteed the neutrality of Luxembourg, and he added that the violation of the Luxembourg neutrality pointed to an invasion of Belgium. Sir Edward Grey said that he had already handed Prince Lichnowsky a memorandum definitely stating that English opinion would not for a moment tolerate any infringement of Belgian independence.

Late in the afternoon a telegram from Albert Gate says :

> " M. Keir Hardie has to-day organised a Socialist meeting to protest against any British intervention in the fight. He is a man without authority, and the meeting is not so to speak serious. But there is reason to fear that the Labour Party in Parliament may be persuaded not to vote for the Government if any rather more definite declaration is made. A very important Member of Parliament tells me that the chiefs of the Socialist Party in France should send a telegram to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the chief of the Labour Party, urging that his followers should co-operate in obtaining British assistance against the unjustifiable attack of Germany. This telegram should be published in the evening papers in Paris, and sent to the newspapers in London who will publish it to-morrow. It is important that the telegram should reach the public at the same time as it gets into the hands of MacDonald, whom one cannot quite trust." (2nd August, 4.40.)

The Socialist Deputies at once promised to send the telegram, but these hesitations of the British Cabinet do much to aggravate our fears ! There is no question as to their looking before they leap !

At half-past eight comes another (very secret) telegram from Cambon :

> " At the Cabinet this morning the main question was as to whether British forces should land on the Continent. The majority of Ministers thought that, in view of India and Egypt, England could not part with any of her troops. But Grey assured me it did not imply an absolute refusal to back us up on land, only that the Government reserved to itself the right to reconsider the question as the struggle developed.
>
> " As to a naval intervention Sir Edward has given me this declaration :

" 'I am authorised to give an assurance that, if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile action against the French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.

" 'This assurance is of course subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place.' "

" Sir Edward has asked me to keep this declaration secret until it has been submitted to Parliament."

A few minutes after he had sent off this message Cambon resumed :

" Add to my previous, As to the violation of Luxembourg the Foreign Secretary reminds me that with regard to the treaty of '67 Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon had declared that the convention would be different from that relating to Belgian neutrality in the sense that England was bound to make the latter respected without the concurrence of the other signatory Powers, while in respect of Luxembourg there must be concerted action of the Powers. None the less, the violation of Luxembourg is a distinct argument in anticipating a violation of Belgium. Belgian neutrality is considered in England so important that at the Cabinet which will meet this evening to draw up the declarations to be presented to Parliament to-morrow, Sir Edward will ask for authority to say that a violation of this neutrality would be considered as a *casus belli*."

An hour later he telegraphed again :

" Extraordinary efforts are being made by business men to prevent the Government from going to war with Germany. The leading financiers in the City, the Directors of the Bank of England, more or less influenced by bankers of German origin, are pursuing a very dangerous campaign, and Sir Edward tells me that the industrial magnates in the North are on the same tack. One must hope that these commercial considerations will not cause the British Government to forget either their own political traditions or the general interests of England for the future."

Italy and Greece had quickly made up their minds, and by the early afternoon M. Barrère was officially advised of Italy's neutrality, while M. Venizelos was forward to say that in case of war, Greece would under no conditions be an opponent of the Triple Entente.

Through a long morning and afternoon the Cabinet sat, and the probable temper of the different countries, hostile, friendly or neutral, was closely considered. War was now regarded as inevitable, and one happy thing emerged in the unity of purpose of all political parties, Socialists and Labour included. At the wish of the Minister of the Interior, no suspect is to be arrested except those whom the Prefect considers as dangerous anarchists. The decree which I signed proclaiming a "state of siege" necessitated summoning Parliament within forty-eight hours, but with no answer to hand from England, it was thought better to postpone this till Tuesday. The Ministers all of one mind and one heart agreed, among other matters, to suspend the closing of "Congregations" and to give free pardon to as many as possible of those who had been sentenced for Press offences.

In the evening Jules Cambon telegraphs :

> "From a well-informed source I learn that Germany proposes to stand strictly on the defensive with regard to Russia both on land and water. Their idea is (so one of the Russian Embassy assures me) that they expect to finish us off quickly, while they are prepared for a long-drawn-out struggle with Russia."

The battle cruiser *Goeben* and the cruiser *Breslau*, which were at Brindisi two nights ago, have been signalled as being at Tarento and Messina respectively. Having coaled, they are heading south and are probably going in pursuit of our military transports, which, however, the Admiralty have done the needful to protect. But these mysterious movements of warships show that Germany is going to lose no moment of time.

3rd August. For some days the Minister of Marine, M. Gauthier, has given us cause for anxiety ; his nerves are on edge, and he is far from well. We begged him yesterday to arrange to block the Pas de Calais with torpedo-boats and submarines as England has not yet taken up her part of protectress, delay from which Germany may to-morrow suck advantage. M. Gauthier has forgotten all about it, and when I send for him to remind him, he jumps to the other extreme and wants Admiral Lapeyrière to attack the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* before any declaration of war. Messimy is very angry with his colleague, and in Cabinet roundly accuses him of incapacity. Gauthier replies by a challenge, and it is only on my intervention that the unhappy scene finishes by their dissolving into tears and falling on one another's necks. Gauthier, who is really an excellent fellow, recognises that he is not well enough to hold his Portfolio, and he is giving way to M. Augagneur, who will be succeeded in his office by M. Sarraut. Viviani hands over the Portfolio of Foreign Affairs to M. Doumergue, and will devote himself to the duties of the Presidency of the Council, which will give him more than enough to do. Viviani and I would have liked to have given something like a Coalition colour to the Cabinet by bringing in M. Briand and M. Delcassé, but a strong breeze of opposition blows from the Left, and we give up the idea.

At 9 A.M. Prince Ruspoli, Chargé d'Affaires in Tittoni's temporary absence, comes with the official announcement of Italy's decision. Italy avowedly remains neutral because Germany and Austria have undertaken a war of aggression, and she is thereby absolved from her obligations towards them; the Triple Alliance is thus broken.[1] That Italy is not mistaken in her appreciation of the nature and meaning of this war is abundantly evident by what occurred at Brussels yesterday evening. At 7 o'clock P.M. the German Minister drew up at the Foreign Office, asked to see M. Davignon, and in tones which showed that he was really very much upset, said: "I have a communication from my Government which I am to make to you in confidence". He then drew from his pocket the fatal ultimatum, which Davignon read, and turning deadly white, murmured: "No, no, it cannot be; it is impossible". M. Below-Saleske replied that Germany was the reverse of bellicose, but that she must defend herself against an imminent offensive which the French were going to make in the valley of the Meuse.

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[1] M. Salandra, who was Prime Minister in 1914, published in August 1926 an article in the *Corriere della Sera*, in which he indicated that Italy's belief in British intervention was not the least of the reasons which determined her neutrality.

M. Davignon could only shake his head and say that such a thing was highly improbable, and that the German Note would be brought at once to the knowledge of the Sovereign and the Ministers. M. de Broqueville, who filled the parts of both Prime Minister and Minister for War, repaired at once to the Palace and arranged for a Council over which King Albert himself presided, wearing the uniform of a Lieutenant-General. Twice was the ultimatum, of which a careful translation had been made, read over.

> " The German Government has received intelligence according to which French forces intend to march on the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This news leaves no doubt as to the plan of France to march on Germany through Belgian territory. The German Government cannot help fearing that Belgium, despite her goodwill, may be unable to repulse without help so large an enveloping movement. There is in this fact enough to show that a threat is already directed against Germany. It is an imperious duty for Germany to forestall this enemy attack.[1] The German Government would regret very keenly should Belgium consider it as an act of hostility if Germany should be obliged—on account of the steps taken by her enemies—to violate on her part Belgian territory. Germany has no idea of any hostile action against Belgium. If Belgium consents, in the war which is about to begin, to take up an attitude of benevolent neutrality in respect of Germany, the German Government will undertake, the moment peace is declared, to guarantee to the Kingdom all properties. . . . If Belgium exhibits hostility to the German troops, and in particular obstructs their forward movements, either by fortifications on the Meuse or by the destruction of roads, railways, tunnels or other edifices, Germany will be obliged to consider Belgium as her enemy. . . ."

When he had finished reading the German message, M. de Broqueville exclaimed : " The trial of strength which Germany has commenced imperils the liberty of Europe. Do not let us deceive ourselves ; if Germany is victorious, Belgium, whatever her attitude, will be annexed to the German Empire." Before the reply was drafted, the German

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[1] This mendacious preamble could not take in any member of the Council, as everyone knew that the accusation levelled against France was false and that the French Government was committed to respect Belgian neutrality whereas the German Government was not.

Minister was back at the Foreign Office with the message —which was coldly received and entirely disbelieved—that the French had again violated the frontier and dropped bombs on German soil from dirigibles. The reply, marked by dignity and restraint, ran :

> " The intentions which the German Note attributes to France are entirely contradicted by the declaration which the Government of the Republic made to us on the 1st August.
>
> " Further, if, contrary to our expectation, any violation of Belgian neutrality has been committed by France Belgium would fulfil her international duties and her army would vigorously resist the invader. . . . Belgium has neglected nothing to maintain her neutrality and to cause it to be respected. The German Government's threat would by assailing Belgium's independence constitute a flagrant violation of the Rights of Nations and no strategic considerations could excuse such. The Belgian Government, in accepting the proposals submitted, would sacrifice national honour as well as betray her duty to Europe. Belgium, conscious of the part which she has played for more than eighty years in the civilisation of the world, refuses to believe that her independence can only be preserved at the price of the violation of her neutrality. The Belgian Government are determined to repel by every means in their power any infringement of their rights."

No remark was offered, and the King, who from the beginning had set an example of calm and resolution, merely thanked his Council for their unanimous approval of what had been read to them. There was nothing more to be said ; Belgium preferred martyrdom to shame. For ourselves we could only offer King Albert's Government all the support of our armed forces as soon as ever they should be mobilised and concentrated. The reply was a dignified message of thanks, although for the moment Belgium was not going to appeal directly to the guarantee of the Powers.

From what Sir Edward Grey told Paul Cambon, the British gorge will certainly rise as soon as what has happened at Brussels is known. In Downing Street yesterday evening, even before the German ultimatum transpired, the Ministers decided that Sir Edward Grey was authorised to make his declaration with regard to Belgian neutrality ; he was to refer to what Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone said in

1870, and to add some pointed remark without actually using the words *casus belli* ; he would also explain how the British naval forces were to be employed.

This morning Paul Cambon telegraphs exactly what Sir Edward will say in the House of Commons.[1]

Sir Edward very reasonably asked that M. Viviani should not communicate the speech to the French Chambers before it had been made in the British Parliament. Germany tries at once to foil the stroke, and the German Embassy in London sends a message to the Press Association that if England remains neutral, the German Government will forgo any naval operations, and will make no use of the Belgian coasts. This only makes one regret the more that certain British Ministers, as Mr. Harcourt and Lord Morley, should have prevented Asquith and Grey from saying the right word a little sooner. It is quite obvious that Germany is frightened to death about English intervention, and if she had been sure of it earlier she might not have rushed down the fatal slope. Even now there lurks a fear of the British Government going back, and at 9 P.M. an agency has got hold of a story that the important session in the Commons will only be to-morrow, so that there will be no declaration from Sir Edward Grey to-day. Happily an hour later we hear that the declaration has been made at Westminster, although it is not till long after midnight that we get Paul Cambon's telegram:

> " Sir Edward Grey tells me that we can consider as binding the Government's declaration as to the intervention of the Fleet ; the House is still sitting, but the success of the Government is certain.

When Parliament rose the Cabinet sat again, and a little after midnight Cambon could say :

> " I asked Sir Edward Grey what you might announce officially in the Chamber to-morrow ; you may make known the declaration as to naval operations of which you have the text. And as regards Belgium you can say that the British Government will *not* be disinterested in the matter of Belgian neutrality, and will maintain the treaty of guarantee. Lastly you can announce that the English Fleet has been mobilised, and that orders have been given for the mobilisation of the land forces. (Very secret.)

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[1] See Appendix I. p. 299.

Sir Edward tells me in confidence that it has been settled this evening that instructions are to be sent to-morrow morning [1] to the Ambassador at Berlin, and that he is to ask the German Government to take back the ultimatum to Belgium, and that if they refuse it will be a case of war. There is a party of non-intervention in the Cabinet, chiefly represented by Lord Morley, Mr. Harcourt and John Burns, and the discussion was so sharp yesterday that it was a question of the resignation of one or more of these. To-day, however, the whole Cabinet is solid with Sir Edward, although it is possible, if war breaks out between England and Germany, that the non-interventionists will resign office. This Ministerial crisis is certainly in our favour."

Meanwhile, in Berlin propaganda is busy distorting facts. In the Wilhelmstrasse there was drafted a Note intended for publication in England and America, in which without a shred of truth it is stated that Viviani told Schoen: " France will place herself alongside of Russia."

" The public ", Jules Cambon telegraphed, " is convinced that parties of French soldiers have crossed over the frontier, and two Berlin newspapers announce that French aviators have thrown bombs over Nuremberg."

So was woven the fable which was to furnish the pretext for a declaration of war.

At a quarter past six [2] in the afternoon, our dear friend Mr. Myron Herrick, the American Ambassador, telephones to the Quai d'Orsay, and in a voice almost choked with tears tells Viviani that Baron Schoen, having asked the United States to look after German interests in France, has expressed a wish that the star-spangled banner should be hoisted on the German Embassy. Mr. Herrick has accepted provisionally the mission of protecting German interests. He has refused to hoist the American flag on the Embassy in the Rue de Lille. Viviani understands full well that it means war; he sends to tell me this, and then quietly awaits the visit of Baron Schoen, who arrives a few minutes later, and bursts out with: " My Emperor and I have just been insulted. A lady came up close to my carriage and hurled abuse at me." " You have not come here to complain of this incident?" " No."

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[1] The message being sent just after midnight " to-morrow " should be " this."

[2] Viviani, *op. cit.* p. 211.

"Then I can only offer you my sincere regrets and excuses." Baron Schoen bows,[1] and then silently takes a document from his pocket and reads it. It is a letter, which runs:

> "M. le Président—The German military and administrative authorities have ascertained that acts of organised hostility have been committed on German territory by French military aviators. Many of these have openly violated the neutrality of Belgium by flying over the country; one endeavoured to destroy the constructions near Wesel, others have been seen in the region of Eiffel, and again another has thrown bombs on the railway near Karlsruhe and Nuremberg. I am instructed, and I have the honour, to inform Your Excellency that in view of these aggressions the German Empire considers itself in a state of war with France, owing to acts perpetrated by the latter Power."

The letter ended with a request that passports might be handed to Baron Schoen and the personnel of the German Embassy. Viviani listened in silence, took the letter, and then protested against the injustice and insanity of the Imperial thesis. He reminded Baron Schoen that far from having permitted any sort of incursion on to German territory, France had kept her troops 10 kilometres this side of the frontier, and that it was German patrols, on the contrary, who had invaded our soil up to this distance and killed French soldiers. Baron Schoen declared he knew nothing whatever about this; he had nothing more to say, nor had Viviani, who escorted the Baron to his carriage and waited outside until the representative of Germany, bowing low, drove off.

After his visit to M. Viviani, Baron Schoen called on Baron Wedel, the Norwegian Minister, to take leave of him, and in the course of conversation he emphatically said: "France has done everything she could to avoid war".[2]

The next day Baron Schoen was to return to Germany without the slightest trouble or inconvenience, and to be treated by all the French authorities with every possible mark of respect, while Jules Cambon, obliged by the declaration of war to leave Berlin, was to be refused the route which he had chosen, was to be told that his cheque could not be accepted, and that he must pay in gold the journey of his whole Embassy, and was to find himself shut up in a compartment almost as though he were a prisoner.

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[1] There is a slight difference between Viviani's account and that of Baron Schoen.

[2] [This incident is not alluded to in *L'Union Sacrée* as M. Poincaré only knew of it after his volume had been printed.—G. A.]

Viviani comes at once to the Élysée to tell me of his unhappy conversation; he is more than exasperated by the bad faith of the German Government. The facts, which have been since established and on which Germany relied to make her mendacious statement, were these. On the afternoon of the 2nd of August, the German Minister at Munich telegraphed to Herr Jagow: "The story current here that French aviators have thrown bombs in the neighbourhood of Nuremberg has so far received no confirmation. People have only seen aeroplanes which it was impossible to identify, and which did not look like military machines. The truth of any throwing of bombs is by no means established, and still less the French nationality of the aviators."[1] To this very straightforward testimony may be added a telegram published by the *Gazette de Cologne* early on the 3rd of August.

> " The Bavarian Minister for War is doubtful as to the authenticity of the news announcing that aviators have been seen over the lines of Nuremberg throwing bombs on to the railway line. Munich, 2nd August."

Thus the principal accusation levelled in order to support a declaration of war was known to be false twenty-four hours before Baron Schoen was told to ask for his passports. The story of an aeroplane raid over Wesel was equally mythical; in his telegram to Baron Schoen Herr Jagow alleged that the aviator had been brought down. It is unnecessary to say that no corpse was ever found. As Viviani rightly said, if we were guilty of these trespasses, why did not Herr Jagow mention them to Jules Cambon when our Ambassador at 9 o'clock on the morning of the 3rd protested against the German military inroads on our country. But not a word then, only when two hours later Jagow went to see Cambon did he allude to acts of aggression alleged to have been perpetrated at Nuremberg and Coblentz by aviators, who were supposed to have flown over Belgium.

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[1] German Documents. Dr. Schwalbe published a rather belated *démenti* from the municipality of Nuremberg in 1916.

Whatever falsehoods besides occurred in the Note which Baron Schoen handed to Viviani, others lurked in the text sent from Berlin. The German Government had notified their Ambassador, not only as to the alleged flights, but of military raids on terra firma through Montreux-Vieux and by a path through the Vosges, and at the very moment when the telegram was being penned to Schoen, Herr Jagow seriously affirmed that French troops were still on German soil. Why on earth did not the Ambassador make use of this information in his letter? Did he suspect its fantastic character? He has explained in his Memoirs that the telegram was so illegible that it could not be entirely deciphered, and this explanation has given rise to many suppositions. M. Aulard has gone closely into the question of the telegram being undecipherable, and says the thing is highly improbable; anyhow, at the time the Quai d'Orsay had no key to the German cipher, which was only found and applied to the Schoen telegram much later in the war. It was therefore quite impossible for our people at the Foreign Office to read a telegram before sending it on. Since the war, a German Commission has gone all through the archives of the General Staff, and nothing so far has turned up to give the slightest indication of any concerted French reconnaissance in Alsace—even on the 3rd August—or of any action which can be compared with the German cavalry raids through Belfort and Lorraine. Here and there a stray shot may have been exchanged; one of our Chasseurs was knocked over on the 3rd, twenty yards across the frontier;[1] five infantrymen were reported as being seen from a long way off on the Weserling-Strässel road. Even if these isolated facts were proved—which they never were—they bear no comparison with the organised raids at Jonchéry and elsewhere. On the 3rd three German mounted men were caught at Coincourt, Réchicourt and Réméréville, and on one of them, an officer, was found a patrol order which told him to go as far as St. Nicholas du Port. On the same day, before the declaration of war, an aeroplane threw six bombs over Lunéville.[1]

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[1] Allegations denied by General Legrand-Girarde in his *Operations of the Twenty-First Corps* (1922).

Baron Schoen, who himself was the soul of honour, was greatly shocked by the miserable pretext which his Government devised, and in his Memoirs occurs a phrase which spells their condemnation. "The responsibility of supporting these charges was so grave that irrefutable arguments were necessary to establish them. Even if the attacks really took place, one could not class them as operations of war." But the German Government was in a hurry and must get up its case as best it could. Herr Jagow spoke to Cambon of a French aeroplane having been seen at Coblentz, but did not mention this apparition in the Note to Baron Schoen. If his imagination had carried him a little further, he might with equal truth have alluded to a flight over Berlin.

It is really difficult to understand how Germany could, at the very outset of a bloody struggle, abandon honest means in order to secure the object for which in her megalomania she craved. At least we can console ourselves with the rock fact that we have done everything which human effort and human ingenuity could do to avoid war. France is surely not to blame because Austria, in annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina, against the will of the people, sowed in the Balkans and in her own Empire the seeds of revolution and unrest; France is not to blame because the Dual Monarchy never really accepted the Treaty of Bucharest, and in 1913 tried to drag Italy into war with Serbia; France is not to blame because Austria saw in the Serajevo murder a fine chance of finally shredding Serbia, or because Germany, instead of pointing out to her Ally the dangerous path she was going to tread, left her—either from complaisance, or community of interests in the Near East—to go as she pleased, and because as a consequence, the eventual action of the two Central Powers prepared all the material for a European blaze. Nor was it the fault of France if Austria's declaration of war to Serbia stirred profoundly—as it was sure to do—the Slavs, and forced Russia to intervene; nor can the Government of the Republic be reproached because Austria, while prating of her territorial disinterestedness, had deliberately planned to carve up Serbia between Bulgaria and Albania; nor again because Russia foreseeing the programme of destruction, after days of hesitation, for technical reasons (and despite Viviani's protests) decided on general mobilisation. Above all, no shadow of censure attaches to our country because Austria first turned down every conciliatory proposal, and, having for a moment thought better of it, reverted to her mood of ultra-intransigeance, or because Germany, having first helped to lay the fire and then made a gesture to extinguish it, finally heaped on all the fuel at her disposal; and lastly, because, with the two declarations of war which, anyhow, could have been delayed, Germany rendered the great catastrophe inevitable.

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[1] *Vide* Puaux, p. 359.

It has been said over and over again in Germany that Russia mobilised first, and that Russian mobilisation was war.[1] But one knows under what conditions Russia did mobilise, just about the same time as Austria, and how she let it be known she was always ready to negotiate. No doubt in 1892, when the first military Franco-Russian conventions were afoot, General de Boydeffe, anxious that the two Powers should never look like aggressors, himself used the elliptical formula, "Mobilisation is war". But among civilised nations this definition could never hold water either *de jure* or *de facto*. Mobilisation is an internal action, and the country which decrees it is not in the least obliged to give it a deadly sequel. The declaration by itself only creates *état de guerre*. It must not be overlooked that if one compares the treaties of the Triple Alliance with the Franco-Russian Agreement, it is quite easy to see that it is the former which entail the generalisation of war. If Russia and Austria alone had drawn the sword, France, according to the military convention of 1893, would have been obliged to mobilise but by no means to fight. It was only the intervention of Germany, according to her treaty terms, which forced us to enter the field. On the other hand, the Triple Alliance thought that Germany would come in, even if it were only a question of Austria being at war with Russia. The interplay of Alliances was therefore such that we need not interfere in a conflict between Austria and Russia if Germany stood fast, but that Austria had the right to claim Germany's help. It was therefore the Triple Alliance which, at this grave crisis, fired the train. Then, as to the Kaiser; let us see what Karl Kautsky writes in the *Vorwärts* on the 10th September 1924:

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[1] This occurs in a very bitter letter which Herr Jagow published in 1922 in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* as a reply to a very moving speech made a few days earlier by Viviani in Parliament.

> "It is not necessary to go through the secret archives in order to be sure that the majority of the German people did not want war. The ultimatum to Serbia, which was the direct cause of the war, had no stronger adversary than the German Social Democracy. On the 29th July 1914, Wilhelm, in one of his marginal notes on a report concerning the Socialist demonstrations for peace, pencilled these words: 'The Socialists are making anti-militarist demonstrations in the streets; that cannot be tolerated on any account at such a moment, and if it happens again I will proclaim a state of siege and put all the malcontents in prison.'"

If things did not come to that pass it was because the German Government was a little wiser than its Emperor, and thought that on the eve of war it would be better to trick the Socialists than to lock them up. But the Kaiser's note shows how wide a gulf there was between him and his people with regard to the war, and how unjust it is to saddle the men with what is the responsibility of the master. Of course Wilhelm II. did not will or prepare for a world war; when Kautsky perused the documents in the Foreign Office in Berlin, he saw any amount of evidence of folly, rascality, frivolity and inconsequence, but he found no trace of any really large plan methodically drawn up. Curiously enough, when he stated this, German Nationalists of all shades, exploited the idea in order to save the honour of the German Government. "The real criminals, who deliberately rushed into war, were in Vienna, but they could not have acted alone. It was only when Wilhelm gave them his approval that they carried out their sinister coup. Too late in the day, when the sword was already drawn, the Kaiser saw the evil which the future had in store, but all his hesitations and accents of despair, his changing backwards and forwards, sometimes trying to bridle Vienna and sometimes trying to be ahead of Russia and France in the clash of arms,—nothing of this could save the situation which had been already created." Such were Kautsky's deductions.

Of course in Paris, according to Isvolsky, there was a chief of state, puffed up with vanity and for whom the witness of the Russian Ambassador was sufficient to determine historians to agree with him as to their judgement. But anyhow this megalomaniac President could do nothing by himself; he had no right either to sign a decision without the countersign of a Minister, or in any way to put himself in the place of the responsible Government, or to say "*I* will proclaim a 'state of siege' or *I* will put my adversaries in prison."

And his Ministers were men of peace, quite aware of their responsibilities, and quite able to restrain or repudiate him if he had stepped out of his own part.

Indeed no French politician need have any stab of self-reproach; Ministers in office in July 1914 and their predecessors, the men who have held in their hands the threads of the fate of France, one and all can hold their heads high before the tribunal of history. At no moment have they betrayed the cause of peace or offended against the cause of humanity. The culprits are the Austrian Government who declared war on Serbia and the German Government who has declared it successively on Russia and France and is now violating Belgian territory;—and this inexcusably as their rapidity of mobilisation gives them every advantage. Up to the declaration of war, everything could be saved; after the declaration of war everything was lost. But in view of the bitter trials which await us, to be without blame is not to be without sadness, and on the evening of this cruel 3rd of August I think with infinite pain of the massacres which are being prepared and of the long line of young men who are bravely going forward to speak with death.

Tuesday, 4th August, 1914.—Sir Edward Grey has made a remarkable speech in the House of Commons which was received with enthusiasm. He has shown that Germany has made an offensive war against France, and has explained that England has no diplomatic obligations towards us. He has read the agreements of 22nd November 1912, alluded to our military conventions and has wound up by saying that England is not bound by any juridical engagement, but that she is bound to France by the ties of sincere friendship and that it is to her national interests that our coasts should not be invaded. He has emphasised the ultimatum to Belgium, and dwelt on the fine letter from King Albert to King George as to the guarantee of neutrality given by the Powers and especially by England. The whole House, apparently, rose to the Minister; British opinion has come out into the open, and the two peoples, English and French, are as one. In order to express our heartfelt thanks to England and to persuade the British Government to land her Expeditionary Forces as soon as she can, and send them with our troops to the help of Belgium, I draft another letter to the King, the terms of which both the Government and General Joffre wholly approve:

"DEAR AND GREAT FRIEND,—I thank Your Majesty for the letter which you have been so good as to write to me. The declarations made in the House of Commons by Your Majesty's Government have created a profound feeling throughout France. The cordial *entente* between our two countries is closer than ever and the news of action taken together has been greeted by public opinion here with emotion and with joy. The agreement between the staffs of our navies is complete; but as yet we do not know whether Your Majesty's Government has definitely decided to co-operate with us on land. His Majesty King Albert has appealed to us as to you to defend Belgian territory. The French Government thinks that, if it were possible for England to land in France at once—with Belgium in view—the troops at your disposal, whose collaboration would be infinitely valuable, the effect in Belgium, as in France, would be infinitely good as giving public evidence of our brotherhood-in-arms. I think it my duty to advise Your Majesty of this feeling and I would renew my thanks for Your Majesty's fresh proof of friendship.

Unfortunately England is not yet quite ready to take the field; so far is she from wanting war that she is still in the toils of diplomacy. Cambon has telegraphed to us Sir Edward Grey's assurance that if the reply from Germany as to withdrawing their ultimatum to Belgium were in the negative, the sequel was war. Sir Edward did not, however, think that the Expeditionary Force would be embarked at once, but that England would begin by blocking the German ports, partly because the troops were necessary at the moment for national defence, and because public opinion was not yet quite tuned to sending an army overseas. Cambon replied to this effect:

"What you tell me is scarcely satisfactory, and you can hardly hold your hand for such very slender reasons. Public opinion is not what it was three days ago; England wants war; the moment is decisive, and a statesman like yourself will surely seize it. Public opinion will force you to intervene on the Continent, but your intervention, if it is to have its full value, should take place immediately."

Our Ambassador then showed the Secretary of State on the map our military dispositions, and emphasised the paramount necessity of our left flank being protected in case Belgium were invaded. He added that our General Staffs had agreed that embarkations of material and supplies should begin on the second day of mobilisation, and that every instant lost would spell complications in the carrying out of our programme. Sir Edward promised to bring the subject before the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

From Brussels sinister telegrams pour in;—4th August 1914:

"The German Minister this morning told the Foreign Minister that as a result of the refusal of the Belgian Government the Imperial Government will be obliged to take forcibly the measures which are necessary to secure Germany against French threats.

"12.35.—A large number of troops arrived at Aix-la-Chapelle yesterday; the French Consul at Liège expects any moment to hear of the town receiving a German summons."

A little later M. Klobukowski telegraphs:

"The Prime Minister announces in Parliament that Belgian territory has been invaded. Parliament votes two hundred millions for national defence; the leader of the Socialist party, Vandervelde, has been appointed one of the Ministers.

"From the Foreign Office I have a letter in which the King's Government declares that it is absolutely determined to resist by all means in its power the German aggression. Belgium appeals to England, France and Russia to help her in defending her country.

"Four Army Corps are on Belgian territory, from Aix-la-Chapelle to Recht. Advance guards have had contact round about Liège, particularly at Visé, which is on fire. Huy and Argentau have been set on fire and the civil population decimated as reprisals for shooting at detachments. German troops are moving forward round about Liège."

So only a few hours after the declaration of war, Germany is ready to fight, which means that her real mobilisation had begun long before it was declared. While the first shots had been exchanged and a programme of far-flung military operations is being drawn up between Russia and Germany, Austria, the primary cause of European conflagration, remains technically at peace with everybody except Serbia. Count Szecsen has no immediate idea of leaving his Embassy; M. Dumaine telegraphs that he is going to remain where he is, and he rightly thinks that until something further turns up it is not for us to take the initiative in the matter. Our Military Attaché at Vienna, however, tells us that the Austrian Government means to send troops both from the 14th and the 2nd Corps into Alsace-Lorraine, as well as some Slav regiments from Galicia, and in exchange Bavarian troops may be transported to the Silesian frontier. We do not yet know if this is correct.

The other nations begin to define the parts which they mean to play in the terrible drama on which the curtain has just been rung up; many of them, however, wish to remain spectators. Italy tells an expectant world that she intends to remain neutral; and after some lively discussions the same decision is taken at Bucharest. Sweden has declared mobilisation of the 1905–1913 classes; but so true is it that mobilisation, if so desired, is not war, that the Swedish Foreign Minister has conditionally promised Russia to be neutral: if, however, England comes in, Sweden may be forced by Germany to show her hand, and consequently obliged, by public opinion, to range herself alongside the Central Empires. Denmark has declared her neutrality both as between Germany and Russia and Germany and France, and Holland says straight out that not only will she remain neutral, but she will see that her neutrality is respected. Switzerland remains faithful to her traditions of proud independence, and from San Sebastian, where the Court is at the moment, our Ambassador reports a conversation which he has just had with the King. His Majesty has said that his country cannot draw the sword, but must remain neutral, but that he himself, with the French blood which flows in his veins, has noted with eager admiration the efforts which France has made to keep the peace, and the great patriotic gesture which has brought about mobilisation. The King has expressed the keenest sympathy with France, who is going to defend the independence of the Latin nations and consequently the independence of Spain herself. Alfonso had heard of a telegram which the Duc de Guise had sent to me begging to be allowed to serve as a simple soldier, if necessary under an assumed name, in the French Army for the period of the war. The King has told our Ambassador that he would appreciate it "enormously" if this favour could be granted to his cousin. "I cannot serve under your flag myself," he said, "but I would dearly like one of my cousins to do so. You know that the Duc de Guise has never mixed up in politics. If this favour could be granted him under such conditions as the French Government may think well, I should personally be extremely grateful."

The Duc de Guise had made this request, and I would willingly have said yes. But the law, as I have already represented to Prince Roland of Bonaparte, is absolute, and the Cabinet thinks it will be impossible to waive it without discussion, which might be injurious to our national unity. We shall not forget, however, this patriotic proposal of the Duc de Guise, who will be entrusted with a rather thankless mission to King Ferdinand. He will look after some of the ambulances at the front, and eventually the Commander-in-Chief will submit his name for the Croix de Guerre, which one day I hope to give him myself when victory has been recorded for France.

The Duc de Vendôme, the brother-in-law of the King of the Belgians, has also asked to be allowed to serve in the ranks on the Est front; we are obliged to make the same reply to him, but these letters only go to prove that any French dissensions which existed yesterday have been altogether sponged away to-day; it is indeed a unified people which stands up under the Tricolour flag to speak effectively with a hulking enemy.

At the funeral of Jean Jaurès, which took place this morning, there is evinced the same mood of entire national solidarity, and the General Secretary of the Labour Confederation says aloud: " In the name of all the workers who have already joined their regiments, and of those who, like myself, will start to-morrow, I declare that we go to the battlefield with only one will, to drive back the enemy ".

At three o'clock in the afternoon the Houses of Parliament sit, and in the Senate every paragraph of my message is punctuated by unanimous approval and applause; at the end all the Senators rise, salute with a threefold salve, and shout again and again " Vive la France!" As my office forbids me to take part in the parliamentary doings, my colleagues think that I should address a solemn message to the representatives of the country. Such a message is not a personal *envoi* from the President of the Republic, but a document which will be discussed in Council and countersigned by the responsible Government. The message, which I drew up with all the care I could bestow on it, is, with a few slight alterations, entirely approved by my colleagues; after M. Viviani, deadly pale and evidently suffering both physically and mentally, had delivered it in grave tones, and after the applause which greeted it had finally died away, he himself, in the name of the Government, set out a long and more detailed declaration, in which he marshalled the events which had followed on one another since the double murder of Serajevo. It only remained to pass the necessary votes for credit and the special bills to deal with the Press in time of war, and the Houses could rise *sine* *die*. The Ministers hurry to the Élysée to tell me all that has occurred. " Never in the memory of man ", they one and all say, " has anything so fine been known in France."

General Joffre, with whom I have kept in close touch during these last days, comes to wish me good-bye : he is just leaving for his headquarters, perfectly calm and wholly confident as to the end.

APPENDIX I

SIR EDWARD GREY'S SPEECH

. . . " First of all let me say, very shortly, that we have consistently worked with a single mind, with all the earnestness in our power, to preserve peace. The House may be satisfied on that point. We have always done it. During these last years, as far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, we would have no difficulty in proving that we have done so. Throughout the Balkan crisis, by general admission, we worked for peace. The co-operation of the Great Powers of Europe was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crisis. It is true that some of the Powers had great difficulty in adjusting their points of view. It took much time and labour and discussion before they could settle their differences, but peace was secured, because peace was their main object, and they were willing to give time and trouble rather than accentuate differences rapidly.

" In the present crisis, it has not been possible to secure the peace of Europe; because there has been little time, and there has been a disposition—at any rate in some quarters on which I will not dwell—to force things rapidly to an issue, at any rate, to the great risk of peace, and, as we now know, the result of that is that the policy of peace, as far as the Great Powers generally are concerned, is in danger. I do not want to dwell on that, and to comment on it, and to say where the blame seems to us to lie, which Powers were most in favour of peace, which were most disposed to risk or endanger peace, because I would like the House to approach this crisis in which we are now, from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations, free from all passion as to why peace has not been preserved. . . .

" For many years we have had a long-standing friendship with France. I remember well the feeling of the House—and my own feeling—for I spoke on the subject, I think, when the late Government made their agreement with France—the warm and cordial feeling resulting from the fact that these two nations, who had had perpetual differences in the past, had cleared these differences away. I remember saying, I think, that it seemed to me that some benign influence had been at work to produce the cordial atmosphere that had made that possible. But how far that friendship entails obligation—it has been a friendship between the nations and ratified by the nations—how far that entails an obligation let every man look into his own heart, and his own feelings, and construe the extent of the obligation for himself. I construe it myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon anyone else more than their feelings dictate as to what they should feel about the obligation. The House, individually and collectively, may judge for itself. I speak my personal view, and I have given the House my own feelings in the matter.

"The French Fleet is now in the Mediterranean and the Northern and Western coasts of France are absolutely undefended. The French Fleet being concentrated in the Mediterranean the situation is very different from what it used to be, because the friendship which has grown up between the two countries has given them a sense of security that there was nothing to be feared from us. The French coasts are absolutely undefended. The French Fleet is in the Mediterranean, and has for some years been concentrated there because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries. My own feeling is that if a foreign fleet, engaged in a war which France had not sought, and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside and see this going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing! I believe that would be the feeling of this country. There are times when one feels that if these circumstances actually did arise, it would be a feeling which would spread with irresistible force throughout the land.

"But I also want to look at the matter without sentiment, and from the point of view of British interests, and it is on that that I am going to base and justify what I am presently going to say to the House. If we say nothing at this moment, what is France going to do with her Fleet in the Mediterranean? If she leaves it there, with no statement from us as to what we will do, she leaves her Northern and Western coasts absolutely undefended, at the mercy of a German fleet coming down the Channel, to do as it pleases in a war which is a war of life and death between them. If we say nothing, it may be that the French Fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean. We are in the presence of a European conflagration; can anybody set limits to the consequences that may arise out of it? Let us assume that to-day we stand aside in an attitude of neutrality, saying, ‘ No, we cannot undertake and engage to help either party in this conflict ’. Let us suppose the French Fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean ; and let us assume that the consequences—which are already tremendous in what has happened in Europe even to countries which are at peace—in fact, equally whether countries are at peace or at war—let us assume that out of that come consequences unforeseen, which make it necessary at a sudden moment that, in defence of vital British interests, we should go to war : and let us assume—which is quite possible—that Italy, who is now neutral, because, as I understand, she considers that this war is an aggressive war, and the Triple Alliance being a defensive alliance her obligation did not arise—let us assume that consequences which are not yet foreseen—and which, perfectly legitimately consulting her own interests, make Italy depart from her attitude of neutrality at a time when we are forced in defence of vital British interests ourselves to fight, what then will be the position of the Mediterranean ? It might be that at some critical moment those consequences would be forced upon us because our trade routes in the Mediterranean might be vital to this country.

“ Nobody can say that in the course of the next few weeks there is any particular trade route the keeping open of which may not be vital to this country. What will be our position then ? We have not kept a Fleet in the Mediterranean which is equal to dealing alone with a combination of other fleets in the Mediterranean. It would be the very moment when we could not detach more ships to the Mediterranean, and we might have exposed this country from our negative attitude at the present moment to the most appalling risk. I say that from the point of view of British interests. We feel strongly that France was entitled to know—and to know at once !—whether or not in the event of attack upon her unprotected Northern and Western coasts she could depend upon British support. In that emergency and in these compelling circumstances, yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement :

> “ ‘ I am authorised to give an assurance that if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty’s Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty’s Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German Fleet takes place.’

"I read that to the House, not as a declaration of war on our part, not as entailing immediate aggressive action on our part, but as binding us to take aggressive action should that contingency arise. Things move more hurriedly from hour to hour. Fresh news comes in, and I cannot give this in any very formal way; but I understand that the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its fleet would not attack the Northern coast of France. I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but it is far too narrow an engagement for us. And Sir, there is the more serious consideration—becoming more serious every hour—there is the question of the neutrality of Belgium.

"I shall have to put before the House at some length what is our position in regard to Belgium. The governing factor is the Treaty of 1839, but this is a Treaty with a history—a history accumulated since. In 1870, when there was war between France and Germany, the question of the neutrality of Belgium arose, and various things were said. Amongst other things, Prince Bismarck gave an assurance to Belgium that, confirming his verbal assurance, he gave in writing—a declaration which he said was superfluous in reference to the Treaty in existence—that the German Confederation and its allies would respect the neutrality of Belgium, it being always understood that that neutrality would be respected by the other belligerent Powers. That is valuable as a recognition in 1870 on the part of Germany of the sacredness of these Treaty rights.

"What was our own attitude? The people who laid down the attitude of the British Government were Lord Granville in the House of Lords, and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. Lord Granville, on the 8th of August, 1870, used these words. He said:

> "'We might have explained to the country and to foreign nations that we did not think this country was bound either morally or internationally or that its interests were concerned in the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium, though this course might have had some conveniences, though it might have been easy to adhere to it, though it might have saved us from some immediate danger, it is a course which Her Majesty's Government thought it impossible to adopt in the name of the country with any due regard to the country's honour or to the country's interests.'

"Mr. Gladstone spoke as follows two days later:

> "'There is, I admit, the obligation of the Treaty. It is not necessary, nor would time permit me, to enter into the compli-

> cated question of the nature of the obligations of that Treaty; but I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion, that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every part of it, irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises. The great authorities upon foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, never to my knowledge took that rigid and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of the guarantee. The circumstances that there is already an existing guarantee in force is of necessity an important fact, and a weighty element in the case, to which we are bound to give full and ample consideration. There is also this further consideration, the force of which we must all feel most deeply, and that is, the common interests against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power whatever.'

"The Treaty is an old Treaty—1839—and that was the view taken of it in 1870. It is one of those treaties which are founded, not only on consideration for Belgium, which benefits under the Treaty, but in the interests of those who guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The honour and interests are, at least, as strong to-day as in 1870, and we cannot take a more narrow view or a less serious view of our obligations, and of the importance of those obligations than was taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870.

"I will read to the House what took place last week on this subject. When mobilisation was beginning, I knew that this question must be a most important element in our policy—a most important subject for the House of Commons. I telegraphed at the same time in similar terms to both Paris and Berlin to say that it was essential for us to know whether the French and German Governments respectively were prepared to undertake an engagement to respect the neutrality of Belgium. These are the replies. I got from the French Government this reply:

> "'The French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure the defence of her security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. The President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to-day.'

" From the German Government the reply was :

> " ' The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not possibly give an answer before consulting the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor.'

" Sir Edward Goschen, to whom I had said it was important to have an answer soon, said he hoped the answer would not be too long delayed. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs then gave Sir Edward Goschen to understand that he rather doubted whether they could answer at all, as any reply they might give could not fail, in the event of war, to have the undesirable effect of disclosing, to a certain extent, part of their plan of campaign. I telegraphed at the same time to Brussels to the Belgian Government, and I got the following reply from Sir Francis Villiers :

> " ' The Minister for Foreign Affairs thanks me for the communication, and replies that Belgium will, to the utmost of her power, maintain neutrality, and expects and desires other Powers to observe and uphold it. He begged me to add that the relations between Belgium and the neighbouring Powers were excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions, but that the Belgian Government believe, in the case of violation, they were in a position to defend the neutrality of their country.'

" It now appears from the news I have received to-day—which has come quite recently, and I am not yet quite sure how far it has reached me in an accurate form—that an ultimatum has been given to Belgium by Germany, the object of which was to offer Belgium friendly relations with Germany on condition that she would facilitate the passage of German troops through Belgium. Well, Sir, until one has these things absolutely definitely, up to the last moment, I do not wish to say all that one would say if one were in a position to give the House full, complete, and absolute information upon the point. We were sounded in the course of last week as to whether if a guarantee were given that, after the war, Belgium's integrity would be preserved that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality.

" Shortly before I reached the House I was informed that the following telegram had been received from the King of the Belgians by our King—King George :

> " ' Remembering the numerous proofs of Your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessors, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship she has just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the Diplomatic intervention of Your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.'

"Diplomatic intervention took place last week on our part. What can diplomatic intervention do now? We have great and vital interests in the independence—and integrity is the least part—of Belgium. If Belgium is compelled to submit to allow her neutrality to be violated, of course the situation is clear. Even if by agreement she admitted the violation of her neutrality, it is clear she could only do so under duress. The smaller States in that region of Europe ask but one thing. Their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity but that their independence should be interfered with. If in this war which is before Europe the neutrality of one of those countries is violated, if the troops of one of the combatants violate its neutrality, and no action be taken to resent it, at the end of the war, whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone.

" I have one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought about the independence of Belgium. It will be found in ' Hansard ', volume 203, page 1787. I have not had time to read the whole speech and verify the context, but the thing seems to me so clear that no context could make any difference to the meaning of it. Mr. Gladstone said:

> "'We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether under the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participators in the sin.'

" No, Sir, if it be the case that there has been anything in the nature of an ultimatum to Belgium, asking her to compromise or violate her neutrality, whatever may have been offered to her in return, her independence is gone if that holds. If her independence goes, the independence of Holland will follow. I ask the House, from the point of view of British interests, to consider what may be at stake. If France is beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a great Power, becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself—consequences which I do not anticipate, because I am sure that France has the power to defend herself with all the energy and ability and patriotism which she has shown so often—still, if that were to happen, and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland, and then Denmark, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that just opposite to us there would be a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power?

"It may be said, I suppose, that we might stand aside, husband our strength, and that whatever happened in the course of this war at the end of it intervene with effect to put things right, and to adjust them to our own point of view. If, in a crisis like this, we run away from those obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian Treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost. And do not believe, whether a great Power stands outside this war or not, it is going to be in a position at the end of it to exert its superior strength. For us, with a powerful Fleet, which we believe able to protect our commerce, to protect our shores, and to protect our interests, if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer even if we stand aside.

"We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war, whether we are in it or whether we stand aside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war—all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle—they cannot carry on the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not. I do not believe for a moment that at the end of this war, even if we stood aside and remained aside, we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war, to prevent the whole of the West of Europe opposite to us—if that had been the result of the war—falling under the domination of a single Power, and I am quite sure that our moral position would be such as to have lost us all respect. I can only say that I have put the question of Belgium somewhat hypothetically, because I am not yet sure of all the facts, but, if the facts turn out to be as they have reached us at present, it is quite clear that there is an obligation on this country to do its utmost to prevent the consequences to which those facts will lead if they are undisputed. . . .

"What other policy is there before the House? There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that. We have made the commitment to France that I have read to the House which prevents us from doing that. We have got the consideration of Belgium which prevents us also from any unconditional neutrality, and, without those conditions absolutely satisfied and satisfactory, we are bound not to shrink from proceeding to the use of all the forces in our power. If we did take that line by saying, ' We will have nothing whatever to do with this matter ' under no conditions —the Belgian Treaty obligations, the possible position in the Mediterranean, with damage to British interests, and what may happen to France from our failure to support France—if we were to say that all those things mattered nothing, were as nothing, and to say we would stand aside, we should, I believe, sacrifice our respect and good name and reputation before the world, and should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.

" My object has been to explain the view of the Government, and to place before the House the issue and the choice. I do not for a moment conceal, after what I have said, and after the information, incomplete as it is, that I have given to the House with regard to Belgium, that we must be prepared, and we are prepared, for the consequences of having to use all the strength we have at any moment—we know not how soon—to defend ourselves and to take our part. We know, if the facts all be as I have stated them, though I have announced no intending aggressive action on our part, no final decision to resort to force at a moment's notice, until we know the whole of the case, that the use of it may be forced upon us. As far as the forces of the Crown are concerned, we are ready. I believe the Prime Minister and my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Admiralty have no doubt whatever that the readiness and the efficiency of those Forces were never at a higher mark than they are to-day, and never was there a time when confidence was more justified in the power of the Navy to protect our commerce and to protect our shores. The thought is with us always of the suffering and misery entailed from which no country in Europe will escape and from which no abdication or neutrality will save us. The amount of harm that can be done by an enemy ship to our trade is infinitesimal, compared with the amount of harm that must be done by the economic condition that is caused on the Continent.

" The most awful responsibility is resting upon the Government in deciding what to advise the House of Commons to do. We have disclosed our mind to the House of Commons. We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have, and made clear to the House, I trust, that we are prepared to face that situation, and that should it develop, as probably it may develop, we will face it. We worked for peace up to the last moment, and beyond the last moment. How hard, how persistently, and how earnestly we strove for peace last week, the House will see from the Papers that will be before it.

" But that is over, as far as the peace of Europe is concerned. We are now face to face with a situation and all the consequences which it may yet have to unfold. We believe we shall have the support of the House at large in proceeding to whatever the consequences may be and whatever measures may be forced upon us by the development of facts or action taken by others. I believe the country, so quickly has the situation been forced upon it, has not had time to realise the issue. It perhaps is still thinking of the quarrel between Austria and Serbia, and not the complications of this matter which have grown out of the quarrel between Austria and Serbia. Russia and Germany we know are at war. We do not yet know officially that Austria, the ally whom Germany is to support, is yet at war with Russia. We know that a good deal has been happening on the French frontier. We do not know that the German Ambassador has left Paris.

" The situation has developed so rapidly that technically, as regards the condition of the war, it is most difficult to describe what has actually happened. I wanted to bring out the underlying issues which would affect our own conduct, and our own policy, and to put them clearly. I have put the vital facts before the House, and if, as seems not improbable, we are forced, and rapidly forced, to take our stand upon those issues, then I believe, when the country realises what is at stake, what the real issues are, the magnitude of the impending dangers in the West of Europe, which I have endeavoured to describe to the House, we shall be supported throughout, not only by the House of Commons, but by the determination, the resolution, the courage, and the endurance of the whole country."

APPENDIX II

MESSAGE FROM M. POINCARÉ, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, READ AT THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF PARLIAMENT, 4TH AUGUST 1914.

"GENTLEMEN,—France has just been the object of a violent and premeditated attack, which is an insolent defiance of the law of nations. Before any declaration of war has been sent to us, even before the German Ambassador had asked for his passports, our territory has been violated. The German Empire has waited till yesterday evening to give at this late stage the true name to a state of things which it had already created.

"For more than forty years the French, in sincere love of peace, have buried at the bottom of their heart the desire for legitimate reparation.

"They have given to the world the example of a great nation which, definitely raised from defeat by the exercise of will, patience, and labour, has only used its renewed and rejuvenated strength in the interest of progress and for the good of humanity.

"Since the ultimatum of Austria opened a crisis which threatened the whole of Europe, France has persisted in following and recommending on all sides a policy of prudence, wisdom, and moderation.

"To her there can be imputed no act, no movement, no word, which has not been peaceful and conciliatory.

"At the hour when the struggle is beginning she has the right, in justice to herself, of solemnly declaring that she has made, up to the last moment, supreme efforts to avert the war now about to break out, the crushing responsibility of which the German Empire will have to bear before history.

"On the very morrow of the day when we and our allies were publicly expressing our hope of seeing negotiations which had begun under auspices of the London Cabinet carried to a peaceful conclusion, Germany suddenly declared war upon

Russia, she has invaded the territory of Luxemburg, she has outrageously insulted the noble Belgian nation, our neighbour and our friend, and attempted treacherously to fall upon us while we were in the midst of diplomatic conversation.

"But France was watching. As alert as she was peaceful, she was prepared; and our enemies will meet on their path our valiant covering troops, who are at their post and will provide the screen behind which the mobilisation of our national forces will be methodically completed.

"Our fine and courageous army, which France to-day accompanies with her maternal thought, has risen eager to defend the honour of the flag and the soil of the country.

"The President of the Republic, interpreting the unanimous feeling of the country, expresses to our troops by land and sea the admiration and confidence of every Frenchman.

"Closely united in a common feeling, the nation will persevere with the cool self-restraint of which, since the beginning of the crisis, she has given daily proof. Now, as always, she will know how to harmonise the most noble daring and most ardent enthusiasm with that self-control which is the sign of enduring energy and is the best guarantee of victory.

"In the war which is beginning France will have Right on her side, the eternal power of which cannot with impunity be disregarded by nations any more than by individuals.

"She will be heroically defended by all her sons; nothing will break their sacred union [1] before the enemy; to-day they are joined together as brothers in a common indignation against the aggressor, and in a common patriotic faith.

"She is faithfully helped by Russia, her ally; she is supported by the loyal friendship of England.

"And already from every part of the civilised world sympathy and good wishes are coming to her. For to-day once again she stands before the universe for Liberty, Justice, and Reason. 'Haut les cœurs et vive la France!'

"RAYMOND POINCARÉ."

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[1] "As I wrote my message the word flowed spontaneously from my pen: the Sacred Union, sacred as the Theban Sacred Band whose warriors bound by indissoluble friendship swore to die as one man, sacred as the wars undertaken by the Greeks to defend the Delphic Temple, sacred as what is great, inviolable and almost superhuman." [Extract from text, G. A.]

APPENDIX III

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

ON BOARD THE *FRANCE*

23rd July 1914

In these marks of attention which have been showered on me my country will see a fresh guarantee of the sentiments that Your Majesty has always shown towards France and a splendid consecration of the indissoluble alliance which unites Russia and France on all questions which arise each day before the two Governments, and which demand the concerted activity of their diplomacy. An agreement has always been reached and will always be reached with the greater facility as the two countries have time and again experienced the advantages secured to each by this regular collaboration, and they both have the same ideal of peace.

THE CZAR'S REPLY

When you return to France I hope you will take back to your beautiful country the expression of the faithful friendship and cordial goodwill of the whole of Russia. The concerted action of our two diplomacies and the fraternity which exists between our land and sea forces will facilitate the task of our two Governments, which have been called upon to watch over the interests of our allied peoples, their inspiration being the ideal of peace held by our two countries relying on their strength. On board this fine vessel, which bears the glorious name of *France*, I particularly associate the valiant French Navy with the hopes which I form in raising my glass to your health, M. le Président, and to the glory and prosperity of France.

KING OF SWEDEN'S SPEECH

25th July 1914

My people and I are indeed very happy to greet in your person the chief representative of the great nation to which, for ages past, Sweden has been bound by traditional links of sympathy and admiration. I like to think that your stay here, however short, will afford you the best proof of these sentiments and that you will retain

PRESIDENT POINCARÉ'S REPLY

25th July

When Your Majesty was good enough to pay me a visit in Paris, you then expressed in terms which deeply touched me the feelings of which you have to-day given me fresh evidence. The Government of the Republic will do everything in its power to cultivate and develop the happy and time-honoured friend-a souvenir like that I shall keep all my life of the days I so agreeably spent in beautiful France.

ship which knits Sweden to France, and I was anxious, in my turn, to assure Your Majesty of this. It has been a great pleasure to visit this morning, with Your Majesty, the delightful Château of Drottningholm, where history and art have conspired to assemble so many beautiful souvenirs ; and, from the moment when it was given me to admire the magnificent archipelago which crowns with a constellation of stars your beautiful capital, the splendid sights which have unfolded themselves before my eyes and the friendly greeting of the Swedish people have filled a day—which has passed all too rapidly—with unforgettable emotions.

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